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PHILOSOPHICAL DISSERTATIONS

ON THE

GREEKS.

PHILOSOPHICAL DISSERTATIONS

ON THE

G R E E K S.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF

MR. DE PAUW,

PRIVATE READER TO FREDERIC II. KING OF PRUSSIA.

VOLUME I.

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M,DCC,XCIII.

two; which, if adopted by the Reader, may render the study of the following pages more interesting. It may be a profitable exercise of the judgment to decide how far the facts detailed in this work confirm, or invalidate a Hypothesis, resulting from the Translator's reflection on the fortune of Attica. Mr. de Pauw has made a distinction, most important, but not frequently observed, between LAOCRACY and DEMOCRACY: The first being a government in which measures are determined by the voice of the People in the aggregate; the second where Delegates are intrusted with the power of deciding for the public interest. The constitution of Attica had a strong bias to the former, admitting delegation always with reluctance, and only in cases where excessive inconvenience would have attended the appeal to individual opinion. This disposition was productive of one very marked and serious evil. Through its operation, a new species of inhabitant gradually

ally became introduced into Attica, devoid of every civic privilege, and consequently uninterested in the permanent welfare of the state. Whatever plausible motives were assigned, it was in reality to establish a domination of the most despotic nature, that the number of citizens continued to be limited to twenty thousand, while the increase of slaves was without restriction.

Thus not more than one fourth of the inhabitants possessed either vote or representation, at the period which most claims our attention to that country. All the rest indeed were miserable beings, apparently incapable of exercising the rights of freemen; but on that very account, the rich continued to import them in great numbers, to the detriment of the poorer Athenians, who, considered as jealous and useless men, were banished from their native country, under the pretext of colonisation. Hence a sophisticated principle of public policy was introduced, which rendered the prosperity of the state always

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secondary to the immediate interests of the few who preponderated in the community.

The extraordinary vivacity of the Athenians hurried them on rapidly to that term which awaits every thing human; and their fate seems to indicate that the mind of man, after having received a certain degree of cultivation, during a long series of ages, becomes incapable of supporting any violent revolution. Even prejudices acquire, in time, so close a connexion with civil polity, as not to be overturned abruptly without the hazard of precipitating societies into that reign of darkness, whence no civilized nation, in the annals of history, ever returned. The progress of Ideas seems to depend on a species of irritability, entailed on succeeding generations, and augmenting with factitious wants, until the organs become at last so susceptible, that they are as much agitated by a breeze as by a tempest. Opinions then become too metaphysical to be rallied on such palpable interests as are requisite to form the basis of society; and

and experience, presumptuously considered as the go-cart of infant man, is abandoned for alluring but untried theories. Yet the government and laws of any independent country must be supposed, in some measure, analogous to the genius of the inhabitants, when they have been capable of supporting the vicissitudes of many centuries: Thus we find revolutions in general to be nothing more than superficial alterations, which affect names or forms only, and leave institutions under their pristine influences. Instead of endeavouring to erect new constitutions, the wisdom of nations may perhaps be found to consist in communicating the utmost degree of perfection, to those under which they have hitherto existed. Correction, purpursued with this view, may easily be reconciled to general sentiment; because no resistance, from long established usages, can be apprehended against any reform that does not violate the habitudes of a society.

The constitution of Attica, like our own,

was

was seen budding among simple principles, and ripening commensurately with the progress of social ideas. But, when new persuasions inundated the Republic, and the power of the Romans gave an ascendancy to exotic opinions, the genius of the Athenians appeared evidently to decline; until the last sparks were extinguished in those speculative dreams, which may be called the dotage of refined nations.

Preliminary Discourse.

HAVING published successively some observations on the degraded state of the savage Americans; and afterwards on those nations condemned to eternal mediocrity, like the Chinese and Egyptians: we will now complete this long train of discussions, relative to the natural history of man, by some investigations respecting the Greeks. From the perfection attained by this people in the arts and sciences, we look back with fondness to that point of the globe, which was for us the source of light. But it must not be imagined, that all the inhabitants of ancient Greece have, without restriction, an equal right to our gratitude, or an indiscriminate title to our praise. Not less than four nations existed among them who never did any thing for posterity, and were seen passing, like fugitive shadows on the surface of the earth, without leaving the smallest monument of genius behind them.

The Lacedæmonians, in the first place, so far from ever contributing to the progress of

science

science, or the perfection of any one art, conceived glory to consist solely in amassing spoils amidst devastation and carnage. Declared enemies to the repose of Greece, they counted peace in the number of public calamities, and only terminated one war to commence another; until at length they were consumed by the very flames they themselves had kindled.

Another nation, equally dangerous with the Lacedæmonians, and not less ignorant, anciently inhabited Ætolia. The language of the Greeks was indeed spoken there, but the Ætolians had the manners of barbarians; and such atrocity of character, that they were compared to beasts of prey, masked with the human form. In some of their cantons, the flesh of animals was eaten raw; and in all their expeditions they discovered the rapacity of robbers. We know among their crimes of more than fifty towns destroyed, and as many temples plundered, without excepting the famous oracle of Dodona, which neither a law'e s banditti, nor the most profane among the Greeks, had ever before dared to violate.

In a word, without laws, and destitute of respect either human or divine, the Ætolians were at once terrible to others, on account of their ferocity, and destructive to themselves, from a spirit of sedition, and an instinct, as it were, for anarchy. The Romans alone were able to subdue them; and then these formidable barbarians had to encoun-

ter

ter other ravagers more powerful than themselves.

The Thessalians likewise never offered the smallest incense in the temple of genius, nor on the altar of the arts. The country they inhabited was fertile, and protected in such a manner by a chain of lofty mountains, that nothing would have been easier than to banish discord, and secure uninterrupted tranquillity. But those fine valleys, destined in appearance for the dwellings of peace, were the very centre of political confusion; they passed incessantly from oppression to independence, and from independence to oppression. No sooner were the great tyrants overthrown, than the smaller sprang out of their ashes; and instead of one they had a thousand masters, without the advantage of a single good law.

Nothing was more pernicious to the Thessalians than their pride and inconceivable presumption. Ridiculously infatuated with some romantic genealogies, they thought always of their nobility, and never of their ignorance. Agriculture was with them a disgraceful occupation, consigned to the vilest of their slaves; and the fine arts, in common with those purely mechanical, were considered capable of tarnishing the lustre of families, and even the glory of the nation. With such principles and maxims their darkness became impenetrable to any ray of

of public or private duty. None would obey; and no one knew how to command; while every species of legislation vanished before their incorrigible turbulence and vanity. This corruption of manners and character will be displayed more amply in treating of the nobility of the Greeks in general; and then it will appear that their pretended grandeur had its only source in a state of absolute slavery.

To these instances must be joined the inhabitants of Arcadia, who appeared utterly incapable of producing any thing of consequence, towards hastening the progress of light on the horizon of Greece. They were indeed much superior to the Lacedæmonians and Ætolians in their moral qualities, and innate goodness of heart; but the nature of an ungrateful soil, mountainous and little fit for cultivation, forced them to embrace a pastoral life; which in no corner of the world has ever been favorable to civilization, or the arts; because it degenerates into a state of wandering and idleness, where the wants are few, and the desires easily gratified. Yet the mind of man, born the enemy of labor and constraint, becomes so much attached to this peaceful manner of living in open air, that it is without comparison more difficult to fix a race of shepherds, than a nation accustomed to the chace.

An Arcadian, in whatever part of the universe fortune

fortune had thrown him, never forgot the rural music of mount Mænalus, the pleasing views of mount Lycæus, the flocks scattered on the banks of the river Alpheus, and the garlands of flowers gathered near the Ladon's transparent stream. These images were impressed on his mind with the first perceptions of infancy, and could neither be effaced by the vicissitudes of a tumultuous, nor the repose of a sedentary life, amidst the ornaments and opulence of cities.

Great changes indeed were observable in that part of Greece, when Epaminondas, after the battle of Leuctra, founded a Metropolis, in order to collect those shepherds, who, scattered along the sides of the mountains, were too feeble to resist the continual invasions and ravages of the Lacedæmonians. It was with reluctance that the Arcadians then abandoned their cottages and folds, to inhabit this new city, which they considered as a dreadful prison. Yet those, who did become resident, and had received the advantage of education, often shone in literature with great splendor. Polybius, the rival of Thucydides, was born there; and the only fault laid to his charge, is that of having employed too much fancy in the composition of History.

If all these nations, entirely lost to the sciences and arts of Greece, are excepted, it will appear that the Athenians alone were charged with that

weight,

weight, which no other power could then sustain. Argos, Corinth, Sicyon, Rhodes, Ægina, and some other islands of the Archipelago, cultivated indeed with great success those arts purely agreeable, such as sculpture and painting: But Athens had schools of Philosophy, and alone knew how to preserve them. When erected in other places, they fell presently into ruin, like edifices without foundation; and that generation, which saw them produced, witnessed likewise their decay. At Athens, on the contrary, a long succession of Philosophers took place on the same throne, and in the shade of the same garden. There the sanctuary of wisdom was never shut, nor was the sacred fire suffered to perish; for the chief of each celebrated sect, appointed an heir to his school, as a sovereign would dispose of a kingdom or an empire.

All these considerations have naturally drawn our attention more particularly to the Athenians than to the other Greeks, who did not afford sufficient features to fill up the outlines of a great picture. It is frequently impossible to discover either the internal regulations of their towns, or the actual state of the country, the amount of their finances, or the strength of population; while on the territory of Athens no geographical circumstance has escaped the attention of observers. The details, handed down to us concerning

cerning this people, include every thing necessary to characterise a nation celebrated for many extraordinary virtues; and these we will endeavour to make known, without attempting in any manner to conceal its vices. Our purpose does not lead us to collect Greek antiquities, which have afforded matter to so many compilers; but to compose a rational and connected work where nothing marvellous can find place, and each circumstances must be critically discussed previous to being admitted into the order of historical facts. Whatever appertains to etymology is here abandoned to grammarians, and the interpretation of fables to those who study mythology.

The chief advantage to be derived from a knowledge of ancient nations, consists in distinguishing where their conduct should be constantly imitated, or carefully avoided. Our observations, therefore, shall be limited to facts, affording a general interest, but hitherto not exactly developed; and of this class, for instance, was the rural mode of education so successfully practised at Athens. Were such methods now to be adopted, we must begin by demolishing the colleges, and hurrying masters with their scholars into the country, to frequent gardens, or inhabit the rustic shed. It was thus with the Greeks that a man was formed at little cost; while in those sumptuous palaces, which at Ox-

ford are called schools, the life of man scarcely suffices to acquire a tolerable education, and the expence is always enormous. So far removed, as we now are, from the simplicity of the ancients, the possibility of ever being able to return, appears doubtful. Yet their system was just, and that of the moderns is erroneous; since reason alone is sufficient to convince us that the very shadow of luxury should be banished from the schools. Thus, in consulting even the desires of youth, they are found to be more gratified by action in the open air, than with robes of purple or beds of down; and where this is not evident, nature has been forced before it could be corrupted.

While the different studies flourished in this manner at Athens, as completely were they neglected at Sparta; and it is reasonable to suppose, that the observations concerning the Lacedæmonians, contained in the fourth part of this work, will cause some revolution in the opinions of those who have admired that nation with a degree of enthusiasm bordering on blindness. Such erroneous judgments were evidently adopted, from not having examined the constitution of their military government, by the rules of true criticism. Even a very moderate share of penetration will enable us to conceive, that a society composed entirely of soldiers, who, as Aristotle observes, languished in peace, and revived but

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in war, must have proved a dreadful scourge to all the adjoining states. In reality, Lacedæmon can be regarded no otherwise than as the focus of civil discord, until, by dint of slaughter and depredation, it had amassed all the treasures of exhausted Greece.

At this day, the very name of Spartans would have been unknown, had not those men, with whom they were at war, handed down their history. Both their kings and captains were, through ignorance, incapable of producing either journals of their campaigns, or relations of their battles; and no book has ever been transmitted to us by a real Spartan of the Doric race. Such men, in our opinion, deserve not to be drawn from the eternal obscurity into which they chose to descend, by neglecting totally the cultivation of science, and by preferring on all occasions devastation to glory, and plunder to the prize of immortality.

Some nations on our globe have remained in a savage state, because they could never discover the light after which they languished; but the Spartans were barbarians through obstinacy and pride. They could never be persuaded to commit their civil laws to writing; and on this account a knowledge of them became so unattainable, that the greater part of those, who have attempted to explain their obscure jurisprudence, have proceeded without the neces-

sary

sary information. Let us suppose at this day, in the midst of Europe, a singular nation, where no written laws were ever admitted, and we can readily conceive that a long residence there would be necessary for the study of its usages, and principles of government. Even this was totally impracticable at Lacedæmon; for although the town had indeed no walls, yet strangers were most effectually excluded by the danger of being insulted as spies, or treated as open enemies. Sparta, in the centre of Peloponnesus, was less hospitable than either Tauris or Scythia; while at Athens, the number of strangers of all nations, often exceeded ten thousand persons: and provided the police and laws were respected, each was considered as a common friend, to whose scrutiny the deliberations of the state were exposed freely in open air. The politics of Sparta, on the contrary, were always veiled with suspicious clouds; and we must descend, as into an abyss, to discover the real springs of its power, the true motives of its conduct, and finally the cause of that general corruption, unparalleled in the history of mankind. Nothing should astonish us in the fate of a people, equally warlike and ignorant: Lost at first in rapine, and afterwards in luxury, they became at length the sport of more cruel tyrants than those who deluged Italy and Sicily with blood. Nabis was at once the chief pirate of the

the Mediterranean, the greatest robber of Peloponnesus, and the most execrable assassin that ever appeared in Greece. By his orders all the Spartans, who remained of the Doric race, were massacred; and this proves the absurdity of pretending that the present Mainots are descended from a nation totally extirpated, long before the present Era. From the discussions we have introduced, relative to the present inhabitants of the coast of Maina, it will appear, that they are the offspring of a people, notorious as the irreconcilable enemies of Lacedæmon. These were the *Eleuthero Lacones*, or freed Laconians, who afterwards disappeared amidst that multitude of vagabonds, collected by Nabis from all parts of Asia and Europe, to replace the Spartans he had destroyed. In the course of the present work we will develope the new order of things, which all these mixtures and vicissitudes contributed to establish in Laconia.

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ERRATA in Vol. I.

Page 93 line 17 for *fittered*, read *filtered*.
138 — 1 for *Apyres*, read *Apyres*.
146 — 1 for *ſcource*, read *ſource*.
191 — 20 dele *numberleſs*.
213 — 12 for *act*, read *art*.
216 — in the note, for *Pauro*, read *Pauw*.
226 — 22 for *raiſe*, read *ruin*.
240 — 11 for *trafficed*, read *trafficked*.
258 — 11 for *Pubic*, read *Public*.
269 — 7 for *Lunium*, read *Sunium*.
270 — 19 for *mentioned*, read *maintained*.
272 — 15 for *adopted*, read *adapted*.
Ibid. — 18 for *Olympus and Delos*, read *Olympia and Delphi*.

FIRST PART.

SECT. I.

THE ATHENIANS.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON THIS PEOPLE.

OUR object here is to examine what have been the manners, character, and genius of the Athenians: and to collect such facts, as were either unknown to the great historians, or did not occur to their memory. More occupied with the shocks of discord than the arts of peace, they have confined their observations to the wars of the Greeks, and reserved their encomiums for the lawless actions of robbers. Yet philosophers ceased not to blame, and must always condemn that manner of writing, which occasions so many useless efforts to the imagination, without tending in the least to improve the understanding.

Our knowledge of such antient nations as most deserve attention can only be founded on a thorough acquaintance with the nature of their country and climate. The history of the Athenians must therefore appear obscure and confused to those who have no exact idea of the

interior of that part of Greece, called ATTICA, which formed the territory of Athens. To rectify the imperfect notions entertained even by learned men on this point, we will endeavour to combine the monuments of antiquity with the observations of modern travellers; without however adopting the laborious method of those geographers who remove whole mountains of ruins, to discover the position of some ancient, but trifling town. Instead of traversing rugged precipices, it is our intention to proceed only by such agreeable paths as those that led to the garden of Epicurus, or round mount Hymettus, until we shall have seized every detail of the most celebrated spot in all Greece. The Athenians will there be seen preserving, amidst civil occupations, the strongest attachment for rural life; and this predilection, never to be effaced from their hearts, was the source of continual improvement throughout the whole of Attica. In proportion to the natural sterility of the soil, embellishments of every kind were augmented; until the avarice of nature was more than counterbalanced by the advantages of unremitted industry.

Young men in that country, owing to some constitutional singularity, were endowed with personal beauty more generally than women; and from this caprice of nature resulted a depravity in the common course of human passions, which has greatly astonished posterity, hitherto

ignorant

ignorant of its cauſe. Although the phenomenon extended to ſome neighbouring countries, yet Æſchines aſſures us that the beauty of the young men of Athens was unequalled among the Greeks.* But before we proceed with any diſcuſſions relative to the peculiarities of the inhabitants, it will be neceſſary to deſcribe the qualities of their native ſoil; for by theſe their genius and manners muſt have been affected, on a thouſand different occaſions.

II.—DESCRIPTION OF ATTICA.

However ſubject the generality of Greece may have been to ſhocks of earthquakes, yet during upwards of two thouſand years they have produced no viſible alteration in the form of Attica: its figure is ſtill that of a triangle with two ſides bordered by the ſea, and a baſe united with the continent †

This ſpace did not exceed two hundred and fifty ſquare miles; and conſiſted entirely of rugged mountains, interſected by profound vallies, where the rivers formed caſcades, or rolled along with ſuch rapidity that they could not be navigated. Their waters, always troubled, were tinged with various ſubſtances leaſt capable of reſiſting the violence of their courſes, and many of them ſwelled by the ſudden thaw of ſnow de-

* Æſchines againſt *Timarchus*.

† Stephanus of Byzantium at the word ΑΚΤΗ, and Euſtathius on Dionyſius.

scended in torrents from the cliffs at the return of spring; but diminishing with the cause, were scarcely to be traced during the heat of summer.*

Plato could never believe, that a country thus marked with confusion, where the strata of different matters were heaped together so irregularly, had preserved its primitive state. He supposes that the force of physical causes muts have changed the original disposition of nature; and he ventures to advance, that, before the deluge, Attica was a region truly fortunate, where the inhabitants, reposing on the bosom of abundance, were only roused by the voice of pleasure. But the waters, says he, pouring in from all sides with impetuosity, have left nothing on their passage but such deformities as can result only from the moſt terrible devastation. Violent currents, according to him, had swept away the vegetable soil from the surface of the mountains, and rendered them incapable of producing trees, or any other verdure than creeping and harsh plants, such as the wild thyme, which nourishes the bees. He entertains no doubt, that these rocks, now so bare and pointed, once sustained immense forests of lofty timber; and of this such proofs had been found in different places as did not appear to him at all equivocal.†

* Pocock's *Voy. in the Levant.*

† Plato in *his Critias.*

Some

Some modern authors have regarded this hypothesis as the fruit of a brilliant imagination, or the dream of an ingenious philosopher. But on considering attentively the figure of Greece in general, and more particularly the position of its coasts, we find that the principal capes have a southern direction, in common with all the great promontories of the world. As this could not be the mere effect of chance, it proves that the waters have been pushed northwards with a violence almost inconceivable.

The southern part of Attica most evidently discovers the consequences of such a revolution; and its actual state is perfectly conformable with the observations communicated by Plato. The whole coast presents only one group of projecting rocks; and their prodigious mass has been capable of resisting those billows, which still, during the tempests, break against them with a hoarse and dreadful noise; while all the promontory of Sunium whitens with the foam of an irritated ocean. Nothing is seen around but those vast beds of sand and gravel, called by the Athenians the Phellean plains, and destined to eternal sterility.

This country presented itself to navigators under an aspect equally hideous and melancholy; but towards the north of Attica the soil became infinitely richer in vegetation, better clothed with verdure, and particularly adapted for the vine and the olive. Even the summits of the

moſt elevated mountains, such as Parnes and Brilessus, were crowned with ever green oaks, with cypresses, and particularly with those pyramidal firs, which still embellish the landscapes on the higher parts of Greece. But as the Athenians from time immemorial had possessed both silver and copper mines, that branch of industry, carried to excess, consumed so much fuel, that they were compelled, for the construction of their fleets, to depend on the forests of Thrace and Macedonia.* An excessive scarcity of wood was afterwards experienced there; and a similar calamity awaits every nation at once engaged, like the Athenians, in refining metals, and in navigation.

As Attica abounded in saline sources and bitter plants, it was more favourable for rearing goats than any other domestic animals. At one time, indeed, the fourth part of the inhabitants existed solely by their flocks; and, in the days of Solon, they were more numerous than labourers †. Agriculture did not at first extend beyond thoſe vallies which were well watered; but industry afterwards, excited by neceſſity, converted the very sides of the mountains into plantations and gardens. Bulwarks of masonry were constructed there to preserve the soil from the ravages of the torrents; and the activity of

* Demosthenes *against Alexander*, and *against Timotheus*.

† Herodotus Lib. V. Plutarch's *Life of Solon*. Steph,

vegeta-

vegetation was promoted by frequent artificial showers *. This painful kind of labour gave occupation to multitudes of mercenaries, as well as slaves; and it was in this manner that Cleanthes earned his bread with more greatness and dignity than Diogenes, who begged, or Aristippus, who feasted with tyrants.

The soil of Attica, from its light and porous nature, absorbed the humidity, and had not consistence enough to produce any kind of grain in plenty, except barley †. On this account, the Athenians were under the constant necessity of purchasing their food from strangers, and often at the hands of their very enemies.

Solon fancied, that in his time the lands might have been rendered more fertile, by increasing the number of wells and cisterns; which he proposed should be constructed at such distances as would most facilitate the distribution of water. The admirable laws framed by him, on this subject, prove clearly that no legislator of antiquity ever was his equal in a general knowledge of rural economy. He proceeded even to determine the depth most advantageous for reservoirs; because, when placed too low, they were liable to receive springs of brackish water. The interior of Attica contained great quantities of such

* Demosthenes *against Polycles*, and *against Callicles*, Hesychius at the word TEIXION.

† Theophrastus Hist. Plant. Lib. VIII.

liquid salt, which oozed in many places from the clifts of the rocks; and some saline brooks at this day discharge themselves into the Mediterranean between Athens and Eleusis. In the vicinity of the copper and silver mines were found other sources impregnated so strongly with metallic qualities of such a dangerous nature, that the fainting traveller dared not to employ them in relieving his thirst. Vitruvius mentions, that a shining scum covered the surface of these waters, and denoted their mortal tendency. From this we may infer, that they were heated by the agency of a volcano; and the warm baths at the temple of Æsculapius attested strongly the exiſtence of subterraneous fires.

When Attica neither possessed commerce, nor a navy sufficient to restrain those pirates, who are as antient on the Mediterranean as the tempests, its natural sterility was too great to admit of any considerable degree of population.

The first adventurers there had no general establishment; but, unconnected with each other, formed themselves into independent villages, called *Cantons*. They amounted afterwards to one hundred and seventy, or at most one hundred and seventy four in number; and were collectively in the proportion of nearly two to each square league.* The greater part received their names from the first settlers, or the shrubs and

* Strabo Geograph. lib. IX. Euſtathius on the Iliad, lib. II.

plants

plants which grew in their neighbourhood: thus Myrrhinunta, Phegus, and Rhamnus, were derived from the myrtle, the beech, and the thorn.

Many antient tombs and temples, at first little remarkable, were seen amidst such habitations, scattered along the mountains, and in the vallies. But the exquisite sculpture of their statues attracted afterwards the envy of kings, and surpassed the choicest ornaments of modern palaces.

Titus Livius assigns two circumstances, as contributing most to embellish in this manner the interior of Attica. Veins of white marble, in the first place, were every where found in abundance, and the happy genius of the architects, and sculptors, exhausted, with their indefatigable chisel, the quarries of mount Pentelichus, and Hymettus, to adorn the surface of an entire country.*

The city of Athens, very modern in comparison with the first settlements, was at first nothing more than a centrical spot, where the nation assembled to deliberate and discuss its common interests. Some families of artisans by degrees established themselves in this kind of capital, to facilitate the operations of their industry, and commerce. But the inhabitants of the country were only there on days appointed by law, or when especially convoked by public messen-

* *Exornata eo genere operum eximie terra Attica, et copia domestici marmoris, et ingeniis artificum.* Decad IV

gers

gers, who, to assemble the dispersed nation, had to run from one extremity of Attica to the other.* Ariſtophanes obſerves, that citizens, who came from the frontiers, and the diſtricts far diſtant, were obliged to carry provisions ſufficient for their maintainance during the deliberations of the national diet. After which these ſovereign members of the ſtate returned to their cottages, to conduct their flocks on the high mountains, or gather the fruit of the olive-trees, along the banks of the Cephiſus.†

III.—TASTE OF THE ATHENIANS FOR RURAL LIFE.

Polybius mentions a remarkable race of men, inhabiting the fertile vallies of Elis, who were ſo paſſionately attached to a country life, that they could never be induced even by curioſity to enter the gates of a city, and much leſs relinquiſh that ſtate of ſimplicity which they inherited from their anceſtors. In this point they were nearly equalled by the Athenians, who in general remained conſtantly in the country, until the beginning of the Peleponneſian war, in the year four hundred and thirty one, before the preſent Era.

At that period they were forced to take refuge with all their implements of agriculture within the walls of Athens, the only aſylum they poſſeſſed, when numerous armies of enemies entered

* Pollux ονομ, Lib. VIII.

† Ariſtophanes Εκκλησιαζ.

their

their territory almost without resistance. This calamity proceeded entirely from the neglect of Pericles, who taken up solely with embellishing the capital, which could never become a beautiful town, had left the country exposed to ruin, without the smallest means of defence.

It was under such truly distressing circumstances that the inhabitants of Attica abandoned in tears their favourite hills and vallies, the sacred temples of their gods, and the revered tombs of their ancestors.

Never, says Thucydides, did any emigration present a more melancholy scene; and no cultivators ever quitted their cherished fields with more reluctance. The habitations they had constructed, according to the testimony of Isocrates,* were much supeiror to those of Athens, both in elegance of form and choice of furniture; and he adds, that even public spectacles, although so powerful over the minds of the Greeks, could never entice the country people of Attica to inhabit the city. They preferred the peaceful amusements of their cottages to theatrical representations, or the brilliancy of a capital, where they enjoyed all the advantages of citizens.

This kind of life contributed greatly to fortify their constitutions, and preserve them from an infinity of disorders both of mind and body, so inevitably contracted by the inhabitants of great

* Areopagit.

cities

cities. For, it is contrary to the indications of nature, that such crowds of men are heaped together in small spaces, where, like vegetables planted too closely, they deprive each other of the nourishment they require from the earth and the atmosphere.

Besides all these general considerations, the Athenians were prevented by particular motives from erecting sumptuous edifices for private use in the town of Athens. They wisely avoided all appearances of deviation from those principles of equality which are so essential to popular governments. That this town, therefore, where the whole nation was frequently assembled, afforded nothing in point of beauty, either equal to its fame, or in proportion to its glory, will appear evident in the following sketch. Luxury at first, instead of deluging the country, advanced slowly in the villas, where people were least exposed to the cognizance of the law, and the remarks of jealousy.* In these secluded retreats, nothing capable of promoting the charms of rural life was neglected. Such eastern birds and shrubs, as could support the rigor of the climate, were naturalized there, until the pheasants of Colchis, the peacocks of India, and the orange trees of Media became common in Greece. The surface of the earth was adorned with rows of myrtles, and thickets of rose-trees, called

* The progress of luxury was the same among the Romans: it began likewise in the villas.

Rhodonia,

Rhodonia, while the box and lime, converted into numberless forms, were employed to embellish the parterres, or thicken the shade of the dusky bower. *

The cultivators vied with each other to procure in the middle of winter such productions as belonged to the spring and summer. While the markets of Athens, says Aristophanes, were yet covered with snow, they exhibited not only new fruits, but garlands of violets, which in many places were cultivated in large plantations; and from being so highly esteemed, they served at times to distinguish the nation. Thus the poets, and probably the sculptors aud painters likewise, always personified the town of Athens in the form of a beautiful and majestic woman, whose temples were bound with a festoon of violets.†

The Archons, or principal magistrates of the state, never appeared in public, not even in winter, without their crowns of myrtles; and this decoration, borrowed from rural life, was the distinctive mark of the greatest authority confided in annual chiefs by a free people.

* Theophrastus *Hist. Plant.* lib. IV.

† This is the reason why the town of Athens is called ΙΟΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΙ ΑΘΗΝΑΙ by Pindar, and by Aristophanes in different parts of his Comedies. The Athenians, who were Ionians by origin, made an allusion between their name and that of *Ion*, which in Greek signifies a violet. To such trifling matters have we frequently to trace the taste of nations.

It

It appears that the cultivators of Attica had invented many complicated procedures, for accelerating the progress of vegetation in the rudest seasons. They were led to this by the particular taste of the Athenians, who were known throughout Greece to have scanty meals, and deserts of the greatest magnificence. Plato has blamed this usage,* without considering that it could not naturally be otherwise in a country like Attica. It neither possessed extensive fields of grain, nor pasturage sufficient for numerous herds of cattle; but honey was in abundance, as well as different kinds of fruits highly flavoured, which owed their excellence, less to the influence of climate, than the mode of cultivation. In occupations of this nature, a great number of citizens spent their time in those isolated dwellings, called *Ifthatia*; and the extent of arable land, of vineyards, and plantations, contained in some of these possessions, exceeded forty stadia, or four miles in circumference. Demosthenes describes one in particular very minutely: it was situated at the foot of mount Parnes, in the canton of Citheron; and the whole of its annual produce, according to successive estimates, amounted to five talents and sixteen minæ, or somewhat less than a thousand pounds sterling.†

* *On the Republic*, Dialogue III.

† Pleading *againſt Phenippus*.

Exclusive

Exclusive of establishments, destined principally to promote agriculture, the different vallies contained many others, consecrated only to pleasure; and of all these, that of Herodius Atticus was considered by the antients as the most romantic and enchanting. Several streams descending there from the brow of mount Pentelichus, murmured amidst venerable woods which darkened their windings through the vale, until their waters joined those of the great Cephisus, in the vicinity of Athens. Spacious vistas were screened from the rays of the sun, by a thick foliage; and while the eye reposed on rich verdure, the ear was charmed with the melody of birds, or soothed by the dying cadences of distant echos. Even at this day, many fragments of inscriptions have been found there; and such ornaments were in general but too numerous from that spirit of excess so prevalent among the Greeks. *

IV.—GARDENS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

It would be omitting a very interesting chapter in the description of Attica, were no mention made of the gardens of the philosophers. They occupied a surface somewhat exceeding a mile square in the environs of Athens, and extended from the banks of the Ilissus to those

* Aulus Gellius *N. Att.* Philostratus; and *the Marbles of Oxford.*

of

of the Cephisus. The centre belonged to the disciples of Epicurus; to the south were those of Aristotle; and northwards the followers of Plato.

Never did sects discover less turbulence, nor neighbours fewer jealousies; an alley of olive-trees, or a thicket of myrtles separated the dominions of system, and served as boundaries in the empire of opinions.

Each sect however was distinguished by peculiar manners, and characteristics sufficiently remarkable. The Epicureans affected no extremes, either of opulence or poverty: observing great simplicity, and rigid economy, they did not appear anxious to augment the patrimony of their founder; but when attempts were made to injure this property, all the Epicureans in Europe revolted against the injustice.

The successors of Plato suffered exceedingly, during the wars of Philip, son of Demetrius. Their possessions were then totally pillaged; and they had the misfortune to experience equal barbarity in the days of Sylla. But as the Greeks delighted in the study of Metaphysics, they discovered their predilection for the Platonists, by repairing all the injuries their garden had sustained from those leaders of banditti. At length it became customary among the most distinguished personages, to appoint the professors of this sect in the number of their heirs; and by such means the annual income of the community exceeded a thou-

thousand pieces of gold.* This circumstance indeed must appear very extraordinary, particularly in the eyes of those barbarians, who are accustomed to nourish fakirs only, and leave the learned to perish.

The disciples of Aristotle, occupying the Lycæum on the banks of the Ilissus, were in declared opposition to the humiliating life of the Cynics; and distinguished themselves as far as their fortune would admit, by an affectation of splendor. Lycon, who long governed their republic, introduced a profusion until then unknown; and he was even accused of having surpassed the expences of the Epicureans.

It appears in general, that the aversion of the philosophers towards the town was still stronger than that of the other Athenians. But depending in some measure on the capital for instruments, and other succours relative to the arts and sciences, they adopted under Plato the medium between extremes, and inhabited the gardens in the environs of Athens. It was there, in the shade of tranquility, and far from the importunate cries of the vulgar, that he succeeded in forming so many great men; one of whom alone would have sufficed to render a whole nation illustrious.

This rural education of the Greeks possessed infinite advantages, as we have already observed, over the method in use among those nations of

* Suidas at the word ΠΑΑΤΩΝ.

Europe, where youth confined to infected colleges, are often at once exposed to the three great plagues of luxury, ignorance, and prejudice.

When the most celebrated philosophers, such as Polemon, had too many scholars to be contained within the bounds of a garden, they constructed for them other habitations called *Calybia*. In these wretched huts, framed of wood, and covered with straw, the students of Greece were lodged to their satisfaction *; for they endured every thing to attain what they called wisdom, and acquire what was termed by them immortality.

Great things indeed have been effected by the men of this country; but their successes depended on prodigious efforts, inexpressible pains, and continual toils. The task of completing a course of philosophy was little inferior there to the hard exercises of wrestling, or wielding the gauntlet, in order to merit the crowns of Elis, or those of the Nemæan field.

The manner of living we have here described prevented youth from being tainted with the corruption of towns, and diminished considerably the ruinous expences of a public education. Very small sums indeed were sufficient for the young men of Athens to attend lessons delivered in the shade of a bower, and afterwards to repose themselves under a shed of straw.

* Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Polemon*.

Clusters

Clusters of such dwellings, at a distance, resembled villages, where morals, like common trades, were acquired by dint of practice. They contained few articles of furniture, and even these could be constructed without the aid of others; as might be instanced in the case of that philosopher, who appeared at the Olympic games, clad in the manufactures of his own hands.

The great art to command and obey became habitual there, from the perfect conformity of the legislation, and government, with those of Athens. The Archon, or chief magistrate of the school, was elected for ten days only, and when this period elapsed, another enjoyed similar honours.*

It is very probable, that the young philosophers, were allowed to choose their magistrates by a plurality of votes; and this must have excited among the candidates, an emulation and contest for glory, equal to that of becoming Areopagite, or Demagogue.

Some attribute the invention of this scholastic police to Xenocrates, and others to Aristotle; but it certainly was first established among the inhabitants of the Lyceum, who were always kept in motion, in order to prevent a sedentary life, at an age when it proves most pernicious. During a period of twenty four years, the human frame, in its progress towards perfection, re-

* These magistrates of the schools called ΚΑΤΑ ΔΕΚΑ ΗΜΕΡΑΣ ΑΡΧΟΝΤΕΣ, were under the immediate authority of the chief of the different sects.

quires not only action, but even violent exercise, to effectuate completely the purpose of nature. Even the very plants, which seem most created for repose, shoot feebly, where no currents of air penetrate to agitate their leaves.

The chiefs of the philosophical sects, who directed these little states without controul, possessed habitations beyond comparison more spacious and convenient than those of their scholars. The garden of Theophrastus, on the banks of the Ilissus, contained a temple, where the image of Aristotle was consecrated, a portico ornamented with maps of Geography, a Museum for puplic lectures, and finally a range of apartments sufficiently extensive to accommodate several philosophers who dwelt there in common.* In this quarter the air was much purer than at the Academy, where its noxious qualities became insupportable to Plato, and forced him to retire some stadia towards the north in the canton of Colonos. The same place had formerly afforded an asylum to the astronomer Meton, and to the poet Sophocles: its situation was singularly agreeable, at the foot of a hill washed by the river Cephisus, and adorned with different monuments relative to the religious rites of Minerva, and of Neptune.

Plato, settled at Colonos, fancied himself at the pinnacle of his wishes, in founding a Republic,

* These details are extracted from the testament of Theophrastus, as it has been handed down to us by Diogenes.

and

and cultivating a few acres of land he had acquired among the neighbouring cottages. His heart was so much attached to this corner of Greece, that, when dying, he determined in his will the limits of these scanty possessions, with as much precision as could be employed in regulating a province or a kingdom.

None of these rural retreats became so celebrated in the history of Philosophy as the garden of Epicurus. This school of his sect was consecrated like a temple, and the administration of it confided to those who successively taught the opinions of their master, and perpetuated the spirit of his famous system, like a sacred and eternal flame. They could not however alienate this extensive domain, which, planted with olive trees, and cultivated with economy, sufficed to maintain all the professors of their doctrine. An inscription, says Seneca, on the front of their sanctuary, announced that the sovereign good was only to be found on the bosom of pleasure, and invited those, who were weary of wavering between opinions, to repair thither, and cultivate the repose of the mind.* But he confesses, that those, who were attracted by such magnificent promises, and flattering hopes, must have been not a little astonished to find simple and honest mortals, practising the most sober regimen, and

* Seneca, Epitsle xxi.—The garden of Epicurus was not, as Pliny believed, situated within Athens, but before the gate *Dipylon*, on an extensive spot of ground which had cost eighty Attic Minæ.

united by the ties of indissoluble friendship, which they considered as the purest virtue, and most sublime enjoyment. Mutual failings met with an indulgence there unknown to the rest of mankind; and they supported without murmuring the caprices of their chiefs, who in reality were neither wanting in wisdom, nor moderation. Apollodorus alone, from his imperious character, received the epithet of *Cepotyrannos*, or the the tyrant of the garden; but his pretended despotism never occasioned the effusion of blood, nor even the sacrifice of a tear. These Epicureans were not ignorant, that in their paths through life, they must meet with thorns, as well as flowers; for they spring up, says Lucretius, around the very altars which are consecrated to the graces.

It appears, by the letters of Cicero, that, in his time, a Roman named Memmius, who was of great consideration in the republic, conceived the unaccountable design of usurping the domains bequeathed by Epicurus to his successors, in the vicinity of Athens. Their friends, however, were powerful and zealous enough to protect them against all the efforts of Memmius; and they preserved their possessions until Greece fell under the yoke of the Christians, who desolated that country from one extremity to the other. Whole troops of priests and monks, armed with axes and torches, were seen by Libanius over-running the districts, burning the temples

temples, and demolishing the statues, so that nothing remained on their passage but scattered fragments, and piles of smoking ruins.*

At the sight of these fanatics, philosophy abandoned the regions of Greece, never perhaps to return; and that reign of darkness then succeeded, which still continues there.

V.—CANTON OF ACHARNÆ, AND THE VIEWS OF MOUNT HYMETTUS.

All the habitations of the philosophers were concentred, as we have already observed, in the environs of Athens: none were seen in any other part of Attica, not even in Acharnæ, which held the first rank among the Cantons. It was in fact, next to the capital, the most considerable as well as important place of the whole country; and, according to Thucydides, could furnish three thousand armed citizens.† This was nearly the fourth part of the entire republic of Athens; and seconded with such preponderance of numbers, the will of the Acharnæans had no small influence in the deliberations of the state. As they constantly voted in favor of the Peloponnesian war, the poet Aristophanes, who was the advocate of peace, gratified his revenge by ridiculing them in a comedy, crowned by the judges of the theatre, as the master-piece of the day.‡

* Libanius ΠΕΡΙ ΤΩΝ ΙΕΡΩΝ.

† *War of Peloponnesus.*

‡ Scholia on the comedy of the Acharnæans.

Although this piece abounds with such vulgar passages as could not be hazarded in a comic opera, yet those scenes of rural enjoyments he so frequently introduces, must have pleased exceedingly. It was a representation of amusements, highly relished in the Athenian villages, before the war; but that event occasioned a manner of life equally new and unfortunate in a town seldom afterwards free from a blockade.

Many other people were introduced in this manner on the stage as well as the Acharnæans; who besides had the consolation of receiving even there that testimony which could not justly be refused to their merits. They distinguished themselves heroically at the battle of Marathon; and by inventing ivy garlands for the thyrsus, of a most elegant form, they had embellished greatly the feasts of Bacchus. On such occasions the character of the Acharnæans, considered as rigid and severe, was changed, as if by magic, into an amiable levity: they were then found every where presiding at the Orgies, and leading the choir, and the festive dance through all the mountains of Diacri.

No people ever applied themselves more closely than they to the different branches of rural economy: they cultivated the vine and fig-tree; converted wood into charcoal for the market of Athens; and besides multiplied their stock of beasts for burden. All this was effected in struggling constantly with a stony

and

and barren soil, on the south side of Mount Parnes, where their dwellings and plantations were ranged along the declivity, like the degrees of an immense amphitheatre. This place bears, at the present day, the disfigured name of *Casha*, and is situated about seven miles to the north of Athens.*

The other cantons did not indeed equal Acharnæ in power; but the greater part were distinguished by magnificent temples, such as those of Sunium, and Eleusis, or by other remarkable monuments, often interesting to History, but still more to the study of Mythology.

Plato pretends, that a course of morals could be completed by travelling through Attica, and collecting all the elegiac verses inscribed on those square stones, called Hermæ. They were placed along the great roads, or in the centre of villages, and contained in his opinion the elements of Philosophy, and of Wisdom.†

Judging from the fragments cited by Plato, these maxims were only of a common tendency, but wonderfully adapted for the instruction of the country inhabitants; and an Athenian was often dissuaded from an improper action by some sentences he had observed on his way, under the shade of an olive tree or a cypress.

* The actual position of *Casha*, or *Cashia*, not only serves to indicate that of Acharnæ, but likewise that of Cecropia. This canton bounded the territory of the Acharnæans to the south, nearly at the place now called *Sepolia*.

† Dialogue entitled *Hipparchus*.

Nothing

Nothing would have been easier than to renew this method, from which some good might be expected, without any danger of bad consequences; for lessons are often more agreeably conveyed by stone, than by those pretended moralists, who combine so much absurdity with prolixity and harshness, that they make even virtue itself appear hateful.

Those monuments, called Hermæ, chiefly erected by Hipparchus, son of Pisistratus, were peculiar to the vallies and plains, while the summits of the principal hills and mountains were chosen for the altars and statues of Jupiter, or Apollo, finely executed either in bronze or in marble.* But nothing known to the antients ever equalled the interesting and picturesque views of mount Hymettus. The poets indeed have unaccountably preferred the Tempe of Thessaly, by describing it continually with rapture in their verses; while in reality it was much inferior to this seducing spot. Their error is even attested by the actual state of the country, which has suffered no alteration in the course of two thousand years; and that the reader may be enabled to judge in this matter, it will be proper to introduce a short digression.

The celebrated Tempe was formerly, and is still a deep and narrow chasm, between two

* ETYMOLOG. at the word ΖΕΥΣ ΕΠΑΚΡΙΟΣ, and Pausanias in the ATTICS.

lofty

lofty mountains. From their summits, says Titus Livius, the eye could not be directed downwards, without giddiness and horror at the aspect of such a tremendous precipice. Far below, the river Peneus was seen winding its course eastwards, and occupying so compleatly the intermediate space, that, in following the road from Thessalonica to Larissa, a passage could scarcely be found on its banks for ten people abreast.

This river, tossed with violence into the hollow, received at its entrance the noxious stream of the Titares or Eurotas, which, in traversing Macedonia, became impregnated with a bituminous quality, so harsh and caustic, that it consumed the fibres of plants, and left no verdure on its passage. It appeard like an oleaginous substance, floating on the surface of the water, and has been noticed by Seneca, in his *Naturales Quæstiones* as a very dangerous poison.

Thick woods, hanging from the brow of mount Olympus on one side, and of mount Ossa on the other, prevent the evaporation of humid air, and this perpetual fog has been compared by Ovid to a smoke of water, or a cloud enveloping the forest.

Similar places exist in different countries of Europe and Asia, particularly in the Hercynian forest, where the emperor Julian, in one of his letters, mentions, that when crossing the mountains

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tains of Germany, he had seen abysses still deeper than that of Tempe. The latter has received the name of *Lycoſtome*, or Wolfs-mouth, from the modern Greeks, because they fancied it had this appearance where the Peneus meets the sea.*

Such then was the savage appearance of Tempe, a spot more calculated to inspire melancholy, than any sensations of joy; while every thing was chearful around Hymettus. From the pinnacle of this mountain, the eye ranged over the greatest part of the continent of Greece, inhabited by a fortunate and free people; and discerning all the streets of Athens could trace the sacred way by a row of statues, of temples, and mausoleums, to the very gates of Eleusis. Beyond the many islands scattered immediately along the western coast of Attica, appeared others so far distant that they could scarcely be distinguished from the billows; while prodigious numbers of vessels were constantly steering outwards, or directing their course round this mountain, towards the three principal marts of Greece. These were Egina, Corinth, and the harbour of Piræus, at a time when more

* The ancients have left us four deſcriptions of Tempe. Thoſe of Pliny and Ælian are purely romantic; while Titus Livius and Ovid have written theirs exactly conformable to truth. Modern travellers, ſuch as Baron de Tott, have been ſo ignorant of Geography, that they ſpeak conſtantly of Tempe as a ſmiling plain. Even Ælian fixes the breadth at one plethron, or about fifteen fathoms; and to call this gut a *ſmiling plain* is truly ridiculous.

com-

commerce was carried on in the *Saronic* gulph alone, than in all others of Peloponnesus.

VI.—NORTHERN PARTS OF ATTICA.

The territory of Athens was divided into three particular districts, where discord afterwards introduced its sway, and formed as many hostile and inveterate factions.

Whilst these were bent on mutual destruction, Pisistratus arose; he reigned in anarchy, and grew powerful from confusion; but the tutelar genius of the Republic caused, at last, the legislation of Solon to triumph over numberless obstacles. Tyrants were then constrained to disappear; the factious were reduced to silence; and under the reign of the laws alone, the golden age commenced among the Athenians, about five hundred and twelve years before the Christian Era. Previous to this event they were an ordinary people, nothing superior to the other inhabitants of the globe; but their glory has since become unrivalled; and their name is still the first with posterity.

The mountainous country towards the north of Attica, called DIACRI, was inhabited by the most antient settlers of the Cantons, who, although the poorest, surpassed the other Athenians, in the love of mirth, and in gaiety of disposition. At first the greater part were shepherds and hunters, whose only subsistence was the milk of their flocks, and the produce of the chace. The sides of the mountains were little

little adapted for grain of any kind; but the vine prospered in particular situations; and its influence afterwards became powerful on the manners and religion of the Greeks.

Some families of vine-dressers, remarkable for their vivacity, occupied at first different spots round mount Icarus; and pretending to have invented antient comedy, they rendered that place famous in the history of the Theatre. This species of composition, such as it appeared before the birth of Aristophanes, was very caustic in its nature, and animated with a tone of humour which often degenerated into licentiousness.*

The Icarians distinguished their drama by the name of *Trygedy*, or the song of the vintage; and the resemblance of this both in syllables and letters with *Tragedy*, has frequently occasioned confusion. Yet the latter, signifying the song of the goat, betrays clearly its origin; for thus in Diacri a portion of the flock was destined to recompense heroic compositions; while the vintagers of mount Icarus rewarded the poet with a cup of new wine, and a wreath of ivy. All the villages of Attica possessed the right of conferring such crowns; but it could not be exercised beyond the limits of their respective territories, without violating a law recorded by Demosthenes.†

* Mount Icarus was situated between the canton of the Dædalidæ and that of Melænæ towards the confines of Bæotia. The poet Statius has observed exactly this geographical order, when he says in the Thebais

Icarii, Celeique domus, viridesque Melænæ.

† ΠΕΡΙ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥ.

Encouragements

Encouragements of that nature were less intended to excite emulation than to promote public joy. While the vallies and mountains resounded with mirth and music, the smaller cantons often associated themselves to celebrate feasts, and perform dances, called *Tricomes*, or *Tetracomes*, when the assembly was composed of three or four villages.*

The inhabitants of Diacri were so delighted with the dance, that it formed an essential part of all their theatrical representations: in contradiction to every idea of propriety, they introduced it even among tragic scenes, exerting themselves afterwards with leaping on leathern bottles filled with air, and so slippery, that this exercise exceeded in danger any thing proposed at the Olympic Games.

To the different amusements described by Virgil, as most conducive to rural happiness, could be added the extraordinary beauty of landscape, arising there from such variety of productions, and irregularity of surface. It was through continual thickets of Daphnoides, or laurel-roses, that the traveller was conducted, when traversing the interior of Diacri, he followed the way from Oropus to Athens.

This road, the most considerable in all Greece, led to different cantons, such as Aphidna, Rhamnus, and Pæonia, the country of the orator Demosthenes: but it is truly there that the brightest

* Pollux lib. IV. Stephanus of Byz. at the word ΕΥΠΥΡΙΔΑΙ.

day

day has been succeeded by the deepest shades of night.

Pæonia has now no other inhabitants than Caloyers, or Greek monks, whose ignorance and superstition have profaned that once flourishing country; and a race of herdsmen, who, amidst astonishing adventures, emigrated thither from the centre of Wallachia. Modern travellers, such as Doctor Chandler, have erroneously given the name of Albanians and Arnauts to those people who are really Wallachians,* and who still preserving their passion for pastoral life, have converted the small town of Marathon into a sheepfold, although the surrounding valley is well adapted for agriculture. In this narrow pass, with the sea on one side, and a chain of mountains on the other, it would have been impossible to range half a million of Persians in order of battle, as the orator Lysias supposes in his funeral oration.

Even admitting a sufficiency of space, the fleets of Darius, and of all the maritime nations of the ancient world, could not have transported such a

* The Wallachians, found at this day on the territory of Athens, are properly descended from the Roman colonies, fixed by Trajan in Dacia. Information on this point will be acquired by consulting a note of Mr. d'Anville in the 30th volume of the Academy of Inscriptions; and a work entitled *Etats formés après la chute de l'Empire Romain en Occident*.

With regard to Pæonia, the upper part on the slope of mount Parnes, now bears the name of *Pæaiea*; and the ruins seen above it are the remains of the fort Lipsydrion, where the tyrant Hipparchus defeated the Athenians.

mul-

multitude of robbers across the Mediterranean. We may therefore infer that the orator Lysias was better acquainted with the rules of eloquence than the principles of historical criticism, a science little esteemed by the Athenians in general, who constantly clothed truth in the robes of fable, and exaggerated the most glorious of their victories, until it became incredible and ridiculous.

VII.—THE FLAT SHORE.

The whole valley of Marathon was included in the limits of Diacri; but a second district, called PARALI, or the flat coast, occupied the entire southern angle of Attica.

Fishing and navigation were the only resources of its inhabitants, who furnished sailors, as the other cantons did soldiers, for the republic. They delighted in amusements analogous to their manner of life; and while the rustics of the mountains celebrated the vintage with dances, the mariners of Parali, borne on the swelling wave, practised their nautical games, and rowed matches with light galleys, in honor of the Minerva of Sunium.*

This town, the most considerable on the coast, and well known in history, possessed, according to Scylax, a double harbour on the Mediterranean, and a superb temple of Minerva, so conspicuously situated that the ruins of its colonnade

* These matches with galleys formed part of the annual feast, called the lesser Panathenæa.

serve at this day as a land-mark for ships in the seas of Greece.

Excessive sterility reigned every where around Sunium, but rich veins of silver compensated in some measure for the want of vegetation. The principal branch of these mines extended northwards from the monument of Thrasyllus, on mount Laurion, until it attained the heights of Besa.

The surface of this metallic soil afforded no such agreeable objects as were found among the vintagers and shepherds of Diacri. Its inhabitants were slaves, purchased like beasts of burden in all the markets of Europe and Asia, who, sinking under their chains and their sufferings, explored the bowels of the earth to procure a mixture of silver and copper, together with some emeralds, infinitely inferior, says Pliny, to those of Egypt.

In another place, both the produce of those mines, and the uses to which the metals were converted, shall be examined more fully; but here it is proper to observe, that no document in all the archives of Athens indicated even indirectly at what period they were first opened. Although Xenophon acknowledges this in his Treatise on Finances, yet some conjectures, almost generally adopted, place that event in the reign of Erichthonius,* previous to the arrival of Cadmus in Greece. Thus it would appear that the arts in general flourished there at an earlier period than

* Pliyn Hist. Nat. lib. VII.

chro-

chronologists have calculated, because ignorant of the successive progress of metallurgy, it was for them a new world, and a science totally unknown.

As the conductors of these works frequently treated their slaves with great inhumanity, they became the victims of their own cruelty in a revolt, which took place about a century before our Era. These unfortunate wretches, issuing in arms from the caverns of the earth, spread fire and destruction on every side. Sunium was taken by assault, and the other villages on the sea coast of Attica were so completely ravaged, that neither they, nor the mines, could ever afterwards be re-established. Such was the recompence of avarice, and the fate which attended tyranny.

The most stony and barren canton of Parali was called *Cranai*, and its only resources were fishing and commerce, together with the produce of some manufactories, chiefly established at Anaphlystus. It was in this small town that the earthen vases were executed, so much admired by the ancients for the elegance of their form, and their emblematical decorations. In both respects they were infinitely superior to those productions of Campania, improperly called Etruscan by Count Caylus, Hamilton, and so many others.

Opposite to Cranai, towards the east, lay that coast, called Mesogeia by the modern Athenians, and still famous for producing the best honey of

Attica, because the south side of mount Hymettus affords abundance of thyme and various other plants, equally adapted to the instinct of bees. Of the ancient settlements in this quarter of Attica the greater part have disappeared, without leaving either ruins or the smallest trace to indicate their real situation. Nor is this extraordinary, when we consider that anciently the dwellings of the poorer class of cultivators consisted of nothing more than some pieces of wood, which could easily be separated, transported, and afterwards re-constructed at will. Thus Pericles, at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, issued orders to collect the materials of these wooden houses, and deposit them for security at Athens.* It appears therefore, that this rustic kind of architecture, was almost general throughout the country places of Greece: otherwise whole villages could never have been preserved in this manner, during those wars, which so long desolated that corner of the world.

VIII.—THE TOWN OF ATHENS.

The last, and most considerable division of Attica, called the PEDION, was an oval valley belonging to the town of Athens: its whole extent did not exceed nine miles in length, and six in breadth, according to the calculation of modern travellers.†

*. Thucydides, Lib. II.

† Pococke's Voy. in the Levant.

This

This soil, watered by the Cephisus, the Ilissus, and the Eridan, was well adapted for the culture of olives. Vast forests of such trees, when in bloom, appeared like a white veil, sustained by branches of a dusky green; and numberless birds of various kinds took shelter there, as they returned in spring out of Asia.

The possessors of those great plantations were the richest, and, perhaps, the most refined among the Athenians; for such celebrated men as Socrates, Sophocles, Thucydides, Plato, and Epicurus, were all natives of the different villages around Athens. This district was divided equally by ten great roads, which, like the radii of a circle, tended towards a common centre, until they reached the capital.

On entering the city, says Dicearchus, no person would imagine himself at Athens: the streets, he adds, are strikingly irregular, the town in general badly provided with water; and although some houses appear more convenient than others, yet all of them are wretched. Only, when arrived at the theatre, continues he, and on discovering the grand temple of Minerva, that incertitude begins to vanish, which was produced by the excessive disproportion between the real state of things, and the splendor of their reputation.*

The enlightened and impartial Greek, who makes this acknowledgement, was the disciple of

* Extract of the Fragment of Dicearchus entitled ΒΙΟΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ.

Aristotle, and wrote some years after the death of Alexander. His testimony should remove therefore the prejudices of those pretenders to learning, who still imagine seriously, that no town in the universe ever equalled Athens in beauty.

It has been already remarked, that the constitution of a popular government opposed invincible obstacles to the pomp of the Athenians, by preventing them from raising palaces in the capital. During the prosperous days of the Republic, says Demosthenes, the houses of Themistocles, and Aristides, undistinguished by the smallest appearance of superiority, bore a perfect resemblance to those of their neighbours.

The nobility of Attica conceived naturally an aversion to inhabit such a city; and chose to domineer in some solitary spot, or in the smallest village, rather than be confounded with what they called an imperious populace, whose glory consisted in repressing all other pride but its own.*

It is further necessary to observe, that the most ancient cities of Greece, such as Thebes, Sparta, Argos, and Athens, were built almost at random. In proportion as their population increased, new quarters were constructed; but the antient edifices would neither admit of order nor symmetry. On this account, the towns of the Greek colonies, both in Europe and Asia, possessed infinitely more regularity:

* Cornelius Nepos, *Life of Chabrias*, and Athenæus, lib. XII.

the

the ground was there allotted at pleasure; the public places were marked out with taste, and the streets either ran parallel, or crossed each other at right angles. This really was the case at Thurium, a town in Italy, founded on the ruins of the ancient Sybares; and a plan of that remarkable place has been transmitted to us by Diodorus Siculus.

An inherent defect in the construction of houses in Athens occasioned great inconvenience: the stairs were erected in the street, and the upper apartments, projecting over these, disfigured the façades, obstructed the view, and prevented a free circulation of air. All this arose from the avarice of the proprietors, who, by placing galleries over the heads of the passengers, endeavoured as much as possible to gain possession of the very streets.*

The Areopagites, who had the immediate inspection of all the buildings at Athens, did not, in this point, render the police severe; and they even pretended to discourage all innovations in domestic architecture. In consequence of this, their tribunal had a ceiling of clay only; it was the model proposed for the citizens; and being thus recommended, any deviation from it, would have been attended with danger.

Amongst us, says Euripides, it is a general rule with architects never to adorn the roofs of

* Aristotle's Economica, lib. II.; and Polyænus Strat. lib. III.

houses, nor render them at all remarkable.* An edifice, too highly decorated, or distinguished by a little more than common elevation, must instantly have attracted a crowd of jealous observers; and suggestions would not have been wanting, that this ostentation denoted a pride incompatible with republican equality. Those who, from experience, know the spirit of popular or democratic governments, will conceive this without difficulty; but to such as have never had an opportunity of acquiring this knowledge, it must appear almost incomprehensible.

The Areopagus was a very mysterious tribunal, and conducted by such obscure maxims, that its principles could only be unveiled by a perfect acquaintance with all the secrets of the state. This court would never approve the plan of the orator Timarchus, who proposed, that the republic should erect a range of buildings along the place, called *Pnyx*,† which was allotted for the assemblies of the nation. Yet this spot was in a state of unexampled desolation, and unworthy of the majesty of a people, pretending at once to the empire of the sea, and the first place on the continent.

Another circumstance tended still further to the deformity of Athens; many spots, according

* Hippolyt.

† *Æschines against Timarchus.* The Areopagus dreaded to see these new edifices converted into places for debauch, where the citizens would have been tempted to injure their reason with wine, before they came into the public place to discuss affairs of state.

to Xenophon, remained vacant, where the habitations had either been destroyed by fire, or erased by a decree of the people.* No sooner was a citizen accused of high treason, or some such crime, than immediately his house was demolished, as a vessel is broken, which has contained poisonous liquor. Neither was it lawful to rebuild there; for the very ground was supposed to become fatal and execrable, from the crimes of its former possessors.

Although the Romans, who affected to copy the Greeks in every thing, adopted this, yet it was certainly a most pernicious custom, and gave a plea to tyrants for treating all their opponents as traitors. It was in consequence of such maxims that Pisistratus caused the houses of the Alcmæonidæ to be demolished through all the extent of Athens, because they would endure no master, and much less be obedient to kings. The sites of these buildings must have remained for ever desolate, had not the good genius of the Athenians succeeded in expelling the Pisistratidæ; and then the illustrious family of the Alcmæonidæ was re-established in all its glory.

As to the real extent of Athens, it is certain that the ramparts, sixty stadia, or nearly seven miles in circumference, exceeded much what would have been necessary, had the nation, in time of war, possessed any other place of refuge. On such distressing occasions, inhabitants from

* Treatise *on Finances.*

the

the country, who had no dwellings, constructed in the openest places a number of huts, resembling in figure the hives of bees. Aristophanes, who had seen these miserable sheds during the Peloponnesian war, compares them to those earthen urns, called casks,* which were in use among the Greeks. All these circumstances took place previous to the days of Diogenes the cynic, whose history, written without judgement, has been read without reflection.

Exclusive of those dwellings, erected for the moment, all the houses in Athens did not exceed ten thousand;† and thus the total number of inhabitants may be determined at fifty thousand, including both slaves and strangers. It would be absurd to imagine a more numerous population, where the dimensions of the buildings were so inconsiderable, and their value in general so trifling, that the smallest lodging in any of the great towns of Europe could not be purchased on the same terms. In perusing the Greek orators, who had such frequent opportunities of appraising estates and inheritances, it appears that the value of a house in Athens was generally about half an attic talent, or ninety pounds sterling. Numbers of them however could not be sold even for that sum, as may be judged from

* Comedy of the *Knights*.

† Xenophon attests this positively, in the following terms; ΑΛΛΑ ΕΠΕΙ Η ΠΟΛΙΣ ΕΚ ΠΛΕΙΟΝΩΝ, Η ΜΥΡΙΩΝ ΣΥΝΕΣΤΗΚΕ. Fact. Socrat. lib. III. He repeats this in his Economica.

what

what Dicearchus has recorded of their mean appearance.

It has been necessary to begin by these discussions, in order to fix the ideas of the reader on the most interesting points of the history of Athens; and every person must now perceive, that neither Pericles, nor any other Demagogue as powerful as he, could ever succeed in transforming this capital into a beautiful town.

The excess of magnificence, displayed in the temples and public edifices, rendered the wretchedness of the private buildings more conspicuous. The eye was carried rapidly from one extreme to the other, without finding any thing intermediate whereon to repose; and this evil, instead of diminishing, became constantly more prevalent. As no connexion or proportion subsisted among the parts, it was impossible that the whole could produce any beautiful effect. The three thousand statues erected in the public places, and under the porticos of Athens, did not conceal the deformity of the streets; because a profusion of ornaments can never compensate for misery.

Pericles, without doubt, was internally convinced of the inefficacy of his attempts; but he continued building, in order to procure a comfortable subsistence for the poorer class of citizens, who were entirely at his devotion. It was through these people he reigned, and by their means he triumphed in the most critical conjunctures

tures. They constantly sustained him against the clamours of the nobility, whose party he had deserted, and by whom he also was abandoned. He has been accused of exhausting the public treasures; yet this derangement was only apparent; for by distributing the money of the state amongst ingenious people, a more rapid circulation took place, and gave life to all the arts. If this must be called luxury, it was of that favorable kind, which preserved thousands of citizens from beggary, and as many more from despair, at a time when inequality of fortune had prevailed to a most alarming degree. Some Athenians, as we have already observed, possessed country-seats of four miles in circumference, whilst others were without a space sufficient for their graves. In such a state of things it was truly necessary to employ the poor at the expence of the rich, and endeavour to conceal indigence under the mask of glory.

Pericles, however, must always be reproached with two very great faults: one of these consisted in heaping up gold with eastern ostentation in the temple of Minerva; and the other, in neglecting entirely the defence of the frontiers. Some few fortified places towards Bæotia and Megara, would have been sufficient to prevent the frequent invasions of the Lacedæmonians, during the war of Peloponnesus. Those insatiable robbers then pillaged Attica in a most barbarous manner with impunity; they employed both

both fire and sword to efface even the very appearance of cultivation, and all the fruit-trees fell under their blows, as if shattered by the violence of thunder. The better to encourage their troops to pillage, it was decreed by the republic of Lacedæmon, that only a tenth part of the booty should belong to the officers; and by abandoning all the rest to the private soldiers, they became so covetous that nothing was left to the vanquished but their tombs and their temples.*

As Pericles was determined not to hazard a decisive battle in the open field, nothing would have been more advantageous to his system of defence than a chain of entrenchments, particularly when opposed to such enemies. For so ignorant were the militia of Sparta in forming sieges, that they often retreated from a simple redoubt, and could never reduce Œnoé, a trifling fort on the confines of Megara.†

This weakness of the frontiers tended likewise to diminish internal security, and produced many other misfortunes. Want of confidence affected the funds and mortgages to such a degree, that a fortune, says Xenophon, was esteemed safer in the islands of the Archipelago, than on the continent of Attica.‡

The possessors of fabrics and manufactories endeavoured as much as possible to concenter them

* Scholiast of Demosthenes, on the *Discourse against Timocrates*.

† Thucydides, lib II.

‡ *Treatise on the Republic of Athens.*

within

within the walls of Athens, where danger was less apparent than in the open country; and this produced other disadvantages by increasing naturally the expence of workmanship. At Athens the crowd of artists and tradesmen was so great, that those who wrought in joinery alone, such as the constructors of coffers and chests, occupied an entire quarter of the city, while another belonged solely to sculptors.* The number of persons employed in modelling bronze and other metals was so considerable, that the whole nation took part in a feast, called CHALCEA,† which this class of men celebrated annually with great pomp and ceremony. The most interesting details now extant, relative to the interior of these work-shops, are contained in the Pleadings of Demosthenes against his tutors. Through their misconduct, he pretends, two manufactories had been entirely ruined, although left to him in a very flourishing state at the death of his father. They contained a vast quantity of rough materials, proper for fabrication, such as ivory, brass, iron, wood, and gall-nuts. The latter article, used in colouring certain pieces of wood, communicated to them the appearance of ebony. Fifty-two slaves, purchased at a great price, were employed in forging sword-blades, and in constructing couches for the great entertainments

* The first of these quarters was named Ὁδὸς τῶν κιβωτοποιῶν, and the other Ὁδὸς τῶν Ἑρμογλυφῶν.

† Corsini, Attic Records.

of

of the Greeks. From the united industry of all these artisans an annual income was produced, after deducting all expences, of forty-two Attic Minæ, or one hundred and thirty pounds sterling.*

Valerius Maximus and Juvenal, by following absurd ideas drawn from the manners of the Romans, have spoken of Demosthenes as the son of a blacksmith, who in extreme indigence depended on his labor for subsistence. His father, on the contrary, was a most illustrious citizen, and greatly distinguished by his riches: the tribute he paid to the state was equal to that of the noblest families of Attica; who likewise possessed their manufactories, and were principally concerned in working the silver mines of Parali.

Such occupations were considered by the Athenians as the practice of an honest and commendable industry, in which consisted the power of the state, and the glory of the republic. Even strangers had every encouragement in establishing their trades; and of this we have an example in the orator Lysias, who although originally a Sicilian, possessed a manufactory of bucklers at Athens, and employed upwards of one hundred workmen.†

All the laws of Solon are remarkable; but the following more particularly merits attention:---

* Demosthenes in his first Pleading *against Aphobus his tutor.*

† Lycias *against Eratosthenes.*

Those

Those emigrants, says he, *who fix themselves with their families at Athens, and establish their trades there, become qualified from that instant to enjoy the dignity of citizens.** On such conditions every person was admitted to a title, courted with the greatest solicitude, and supposed then to convey infinitely more honor than at this day is attached to a prince of the empire. Kings of Europe and of Asia frequently supplicated the republic of Athens to have their names inscribed in the list of citizens, that they might enjoy even this feeble pretence of belonging to the most celebrated town in the universe.†

What sovereign princes obtained with difficulty, was bestowed freely by Solon on simple manufacturers. He wished to ennoble useful people, and repress the hereditary nobility, who will afterwards appear as the greatest defect in the government of the republic. But another obvious inducement in favor of trade must have presented itself, when he reflected that the soil of Attica could never suffice for any great degree of population.

In this manner, and from such motives, did the immortal legislator of the Athenians promote

* Plutarch, *Life of Solon.*

† The names are known of nine or ten kings who were citizens of Athens, such as Leucon, Evagoras, Tereus, Perdiccas and Dionysius the Tyrant, who received this title to detach him from the party of the Lacedæmonians.

industry;

industry; and he even intimidated parents, who neglected to teach the mechanical arts to their offspring.

Extraordinary activity arose from the amazing intercourse of nations, particularly at Piræus, which was the principal depository for merchandize, and situated about forty stadia, or four miles, to the west of Athens. The markets of Greece, says Isocrates, afford wares of various kinds; but all are found united in great abundance at Piræus.* This was really conveying in a few words the idea of an extensive commerce, and would be applicable to the flourishing state of Amsterdam, or London.

The Exchange of Piræus, called the *Digma*, surpassed in consequence even that of Corinth, and was more frequented by strangers than all the other parts of Greece. It became the rendezvous of all nations along the coast of the mediterranean, and the Euxine sea, from Marseilles, to Carthage, and Trebizond.

No kind of public edifices were more common at this port, than those galleries surrounded with colonnades, called in their language STOA, and named by us Porticos. Never did the imagination of ancient architects suggest any form more pleasing to the eyes of the Greeks, who often lavished the most expensive decorations on those favorite buildings, which were destined to various purposes. There the Athenians

* PANEGYR.

walked, displayed their merchandize, kept schools, recited verses, and administered justice. This passion for porticos prevailed even in the smallest towns, and became more ruinous, as such gratifications did not admit of a previous calculation; for no architect could determine the exact value of rare productions, either in painting or sculpture.

It is now universally allowed, that the beautiful effect of these colonnades must have been greatly diminished by the shade of so many trees planted by the Greeks in the very centre of their towns. From this desire of preserving at least the image of a country life, Athens was encumbered with plane-trees; and the shade of the olive concealed the monuments of Megara from the view of travellers. At Chalcis in Eubæa, this extravagance prevailed so far, that every winding was lined by a forest, which spread itself over the public places, and involved the streets in continual darkness.*

It is now an easy matter, even for the illiterate reader, to form a very accurate idea of the interior of a Greek town, where four things were indispensable, a theatre, a temple, a portico, and a grove. The houses of the inhabitants, barely large enough for shelter, appeared to be only an accessary part; and the scarcity of fuel in Greece would not admit of communicating a necessary degree of heat to spacious apartments. It is even a problem amongst modern philoso-

* Pausanias, and Dicearchus on the *State of Greece.*

phers

phers, to determine the propriety or folly of rearing such vast and superb edifices in the different cities of Europe. With a thousand other inconveniences, they occasion a prodigious destruction of combustible matter; and extraordinary revolutions are already foreseen in the political world, when the present resources of coal and turf are exhausted. Numbers of towns must then fall into ruins, and many countries be depopulated, and abandoned to the wild beasts, in order to procure fuel by re-establishing the forests.

IX.—ELEUSIS, AND THE ISLAND OF SALAMIS.

Exclusive of the three districts already noticed, the whole territory of Eleusis was incorporated with Attica, although formerly a separate and independent kingdom; or rather, in less exaggerated terms, it had formed the domain of some little Cacique, when that class of sovereigns became so numerous in Greece, during the heroic age.

The Eleusinians submitted themselves voluntarily to the dominion of Athens, on condition of enjoying similar rights with the other districts, added to the privilege of celebrating exclusively the mysteries of Ceres and Proserpine. Such ceremonies were an inexhaustible source of riches; and the same policy existed both at Delphi and Rome, where every advantage was taken of credulity to establish an empire for superstition on the weakness of the human understanding.

All the towns in Greece, however small their importance, were provided with those public guides, called Mystagogues. They depended immediately on the magistrates; and when travellers visited the public monuments, it was their business to explain every thing worthy of attention. Great pretenders to genius and erudition, they undertook to illustrate the most obscure points of antiquity, or unfold all the secrets of art; and when this could not be effected with truth, they made no scruple of employing falsehood. At Eleusis particularly, the mystagogues abused the privileges of their profession, by endeavouring to impose such stories on strangers as were altogether incredible. Amongst others, they pretended, that no person should approach a field called *Rharia*, without a sacred awe, because it had served for the first essays of agriculture. In that spot, said they, the barley was sown which Ceres bestowed to the Athenians. Without the aid of Historic Criticism, Geography can sufficiently demonstrate the absolute falsehood of such a tradition. The field Rharia was situated on the very banks of the little Cephisus, the most dangerous river of Attica. When swelled by the sudden dissolution of snow on the mounts Pecilus, and Parnes, it carried destruction on every side; and to one of these inundations the Greek historians, who were always hyperbolists, have given the name of the Eleusinian Deluge. Common sense points out

out the folly of exposing seeds on the brink of such a torrent; and besides, the first attempts towards agriculture, in all probability, neither took place in extensive fields, nor open plains, but in small inclosures, around the huts of savages, who were ambitious of being metamorphosed into men.

Before cultivation could be extended in the country, it was necessary to destroy the wild beasts, and disperse prodigious swarms of voracious birds. This must have been particularly tedious in Greece, where the arable lands were entirely in low vallies, and a vast chain of surrounding mountains, covered with woods, afforded refuge for multitudes of frugivorous animals. Different kinds of deer were numerous, and wild buffaloes in very ancient times abounded from Thrace even to the southern limits of Peloponnesus. The fable of the bull of Marathon proves, that they frequented likewise the low country of Attica, where the race, long subdued, is now employed in labor.*

Animals of this class would in one night have destroyed the crops, and annihilated all the hopes of the husband-man, had not some means been found of restraining their incursions, either by strong palisades, or impenetrable hedges. But of all these circumstances, which evidently existed, or must necessarily have taken place, not one was attended to by the mystagogues of

* Spon, Voyage de la Greece.

Eleusis. What was said of the priests, who officiated at the oracle of Delphi, might justly be applied to these men: mistaken for ships of war at a distance, on approaching, they appeared like boats, and were at last found to be only sticks floating on the billows.

In the dissertations published by Mr. Heyne on the origin of alimentary plants, that illustrious and learned man supposes, that barley was indigenous through all the northern part of the Athenian territory.* This opinion seems the more founded, as in almost every country of Europe a wild species of this grain is produced, which might be greatly improved in the course of fifty years by periodical culture.†

All the little settlements of Attica had their particular traditions, mutually contradictory, and destructive of each other. The inhabitants of Sciron pretended, that their lands had been earlier cultivated than those of Eleusis, because they furnished more ancient monuments of agriculture;‡ and really the fields of Sciron, and the plain of Thria in general were not subject to inundations so destructive to tillage.

With respect to the little town of Eleusis, its interior bore a perfect resemblance to that of Athens. Close to superb temples, constructed of

* *Origines Panificii, frugumque inventarum initia.* Diss 2d.

† This wild barley is the *Hordeum murinum* of botanists; and the weight of its grain is in the proportion of one to six with cultivated barley.

‡ Plutarch, *Præcept. Connubial.*

white

white marble, were seen such wretched huts, that their price seldom exceeded five Minæ, or fifteen pounds sterling.* Demosthenes considers it as highly criminal in Midias, his mortal enemy, to have erected a dwelling for himself at Eleusis, surpassing in ornaments all the surrounding houses. But he ſhould have been candid enough to acknowledge, that this crime, ſo ſhocking to the ſpirit of republican equality, could easily be committed amidst ſuch a heap of hovels.

The author of that Itinerary, which bears at this day the name of the emperor Antoninus, has erred greatly reſpecting the real breadth of Attica between Oropus and Eleusis. It did not in fact much exceed twenty miles, and the whole length of the territory ſcarcely amounted to fifty†: ſo that from all parts of the frontiers it was practicable to viſit the capital, and return on the ſame day.

Supposing it to be a fact, that patriotiſm diminiſhes in proportion as government becomes extenſive, the Athenians had every motive to be

* Isæus in his Pleading relative to *the ſucceſſion of Hagnias.*

† The Itinerary of Antoninus reckons forty-four miles from Oropus to Athens. It is ſurpriſing that ſo great an error was unnoticed, for in fact the diſtance is not more than twenty-four miles. Mr. d'Anville, who has committed ſo many faults in his Map of ancient Greece, makes the land of Attica extend upwards of a league too far eaſtward. Thus he ſuppoſes Marathon to be 100 ſtadia from Athens, when in fact it is not more than eighty.

attached

attached to their country, because all the inhabitants were known to each other. In great empires, the different provinces become strangers; and where so little connexion subsists between the component parts of a state, patriotism can only be comparatively the cold effect of reason, even when the sway is less absolute than that which admits only the interest of the Despot.

The Greeks, who delighted in epigrams, observed that nature had been very liberal to the Athenians, in strewing so many islands along their coasts; but unfortunately, added they, not one of them all is habitable. Salamis however should have been excepted: it was called by Euripides a land rich in bees, and fertile in olives; and the predilection he discovers for this place justifies the opinion, that he was born there. Thus it could at once boast of having given birth to the chief of tragic poets, as well as to Solon, the most illustrious of legislators; and this glory surely equalled that of a naval triumph, now so little interesting, while the Iphigenia in Tauris, and the legislation of Solon are objects of universal admiration. The warriors of ancient Greece have transmitted to posterity nothing more than the shadow of a vain name, founded on the effusion of blood. But to its philosophers and poets we owe those inestimable productions, which tend to perfect the taste of civilized nations, and correct the manners of those who are barbarians.

According

According to Strabo, and Eustathius, the island of Salamis, about seven miles in length, lay nearly opposite to Eleusis. At some distance it appeared to consist only of a group of rocks, covered with mastich-trees and pines; but the valleys of the interior parts were well adapted for grain, and the rising ground for vineyards. In this respect it had a decided advantage over some islands of the Archipelago, destitute both of shade and verdure, where the singing of birds was never heard, even in the most genial days of returning spring. The greatest torment of those, who were condemned by the Roman emperors to remain there, consisted in regretting continually, amidst sterile and burning rocks, the gay fields and rich gardens of Italy.

Ever since the days of Solon, all the inhabitants of Salamis had been citizens of Athens; and, on all great occasions, the public criers were sent to require their assistance in the deliberations of the state. The general opinion of their superior skill in naval affairs gave some influence to their suffrages, especially as the Athenians never had a war by land alone. Whenever they sacrificed to Mars, an offering was likewise prepared for the altars of Neptune.

Those who made the tour of Attica, found it expedient to embark at Salamis in very light boats; and doubling the promontory of Sunium, they landed at the mouth of the Asopus, in the territory of Oropus. This circumnavigation, computed

puted by the pilot Scylax at eleven hundred and forty stadia, amounts scarcely to one hundred miles, according to modern calculations. Such were the boundaries, towards the mediterranean, of all that the Athenians possessed on the continent of Greece; and so small an extent sufficed to attain such an extraordinary degree of glory and power. At this day whole kingdoms in Europe, with infinitely greater resources, are incapable in any thing of equalling the Athenians. The sovereigns of such countries resemble those ignorant sculptors, who change beautiful blocks of marble into deformed statues; and they seem to have been destined to mediocrity, as the Athenians were to grandeur.

X.—CLIMATE OF ATTICA, AND OF GREECE IN GENERAL.

Although the town and territory of Athens had nearly a similar position on the globe with the southern parts of Spain, yet the air was far from being so soft and temperate there as in the kingdom of Valencia.

Through the whole continent of Greece the cold in winter was rigorous, and the heat of summer excessive, without appearing to have any determined proportion either with the elevation of the pole, or the degrees of latitude.

The most inattentive and uninformed travellers have been sensible of this phenomenon, which even learned men have not explained.

It

It evidently proceeded from the great inequality of surface, in an extent of four hundred miles through the interior of Thrace to the southern extremity of Peloponnesus. During summer, the rays of the sun were concentred amidst hollow vallies, as in the focus of a concave glass; but as winter advanced, the chilling influence of accumulated snows on the summits of Olympus, Parnassus, Helicon, Cytheron, Taygetes, and Parnes, rendered the cold excessive.

Each blast of wind, traversing those frozen points of the earth, affected strongly the atmosphere of Athens, which towards the summer solstice, became almost suffocating from the heat of the adjacent valleys.

This inequality of seasons had a great influence on the manners and customs of the Greeks. Thus, in reading their history, we find them at times naked in the circus and gymnasium, as if inhabiting the banks of the Senegal, under the equinoctial line; at others they are represented, wrapped up in woollen mantles, and flying for refuge to the warmest apartments. The dress, chiefly adopted by the Athenians, discovered neither grace, nor elegance, and besides was inconvenient for all the inflections of the human body. Quintilian observes, that many gestures, in use among the Roman orators, were impracticable for the Greeks, because of their awkward clothing

clothing; * and this constraint was most conspicuous in their comic actors, who, according to the national custom, never appeared at the Theatre without a mantle.

It was likewise remarked by the ancients, that, at Athens and all the other towns of European Greece, the dress of the women was little adapted to the rigor of the climate. As their constitution, says Plutarch, is less ardent, they employ only such light tissues, and thin stuffs, as would be insufficient to preserve the most robust of our sex against the inclemency of the weather. †

No such false systems would have been proposed at this day, either relative to the encrease of cold on the terrestrial globe, or the existence of the Atlantides, if the records transmitted by the Greeks concerning their native soil had been studied with attention.

The images and expressions employed by Hesiod, in painting the winters of Bæotia, in the centre of Greece, would serve now without exaggeration to describe those of Germany.

When the cold winds, says he, begin to reign with fury on the mountains of Thrace, the animals are seen famished, and shuddering in the deep recesses of the forest,. The thickness of their furs cannot prevent them from being pene-

* *Instit. Orat.* Lib. XI.

† *Quæst. Conviv.* Macrobius has copied the same observation in his *Saturnalia*, Lib. VII.

trated

trated by atoms of ice. Even the sturdy bull shrinks before the storm; and the woolly flocks alone are defended by the density of their fleece. As for man, that rigorous season hastens in him the term of decrepitude: his members are contracted, and his tottering body bends under the weight of the compressed atmosphere. *

On a subject so universally known, we may suppose, that Hesiod wou'd be careful to render his description consistent with truth and nature. It is with like accuracy that he prescribes the form most eligible for the garments of the cultivators, and the shepherds of Bæotia. The principal piece of this model consisted of skins sewed together with sinews, as is practised in Lapland, or among the Samoeides.

What appears still more remarkable is the circumstance of those people, who, under the conduct of Brennius, invaded Phocis. Although collected, according to our observations, on the confines of Germany, they were unable to resist the cold between the 38th and 39th degree of northern latitude. This event took place at the foot of mount Parnassus, which was indeed without exception the most horrible mountain of Greece. Plutarch assures us, that those drunken and fanatical women, called *Thyades*, were once surprized there by a dreadful whirlwind of snow, and must all have perished, had they not been rescued by the inhabitants of Del-

phi. He adds, that on this occasion, the frost had taken such possession of the stuff of their garments, that they appeared to have the solidity of marble. *

It is unpleasing to observe that a work, in other respects so estimable as Winkelman's History of Art, should contain notions so very inaccurate concerning the climate of Greece. He seems to have founded his opinion on geographical charts only, where Thebes is described in a more southern latitude than Naples; and from this he would conclude, that the environs of both places enjoyed equally the advantages of a serene sky, and a temperate zone. To remove this illusion, it is only necessary to read what Theophrastus relates of the congelation of trees in Greece, where, at times, even the roots of the vines did not escape. † Yet such accidents are rare on the banks of the Moselle, or on the hills bordering the course of the Rhine.

Hippocrates asserts, that those countries, where the winters are rigorous, and the summers exceedingly warm, produce a race of men endowed with extraordinary aptitude for the arts.‡ Is not this a compliment expressly designed for Greece, where the contrast of seasons is more striking, and the extremes greater than in any other spot in the same latitude?

* *De primo frigido.*

† *De causis Plantarum*, Lib. V.

‡ *De Aere, aquis, et locis.*

Had

Had the climate been always temperate, it would have rendered the inhabitants cowardly, indolent, and lazy: continual cold, on the other hand, must have impaired the subtility of their nerves, and that active spirit which rendered them the most laborious people on earth. While they covered the sea with ships, the islands and continent were ornamented with their towns and other monuments of unparalleled industry. Never did any country produce philosophers more studious, or sculptors more indefatigable; such fertile painters, and enterprising poets. No sooner had their authors produced one epic poem of twelve thousand verses, than they commenced another; and were thus all their lives agitated by a Musolepsy.

It has been remarked, and with truth, that the rivers of Peloponnesus are never charged with such quantities of ice as descend from the heights of Arcadia, and that chain of mountains extending from Lacedæmon to cape Tænarus. This however proceeds solely from the great rapidity of the former; for in fact they are mostly torrents, confined in narrow beds, where a small surface is exposed to the action of the air; while the great rivers of Thrace, such as the Hebrus and the Strymon flow more placidly, and are often frozen to the bottom of their waters. Yet the mouth of the former is more towards the south than Rome, and nearly in the same latitude with Madrid.

In

In such a mountainous country as Greece, it frequently happened, that one valley was sheltered from the impressions of the frozen air, while in another, more exposed, the plants and trees least capable of resisting the cold were liable to perish. Thus a current of wind alone, in certain directions, occasioned an amazing difference in the temperature of the atmosphere, even at very trifling distances. The island of Salamis, says Strabo, is only separated from the territory of Athens by a canal of two stadia, or two hundred and fifty steps in breadth; yet fruits came to maturity earlier there than in Attica, and the harvest always ended long before it had commenced on the continent.

Theophrastus pretends, that the cold in Greece generally attained its greatest force about forty days after the winter solstice, or about the end of January.* It does not therefore appear, that this periodical term has undergone any alteration in the lapse of many centuries. Chevalier Wehler, who visited the environs of Athens in the month of February, was prevented by snows in several of his attempts to gain the summit of mount Hymettus; and, although wrapped up in very warm clothes, he supported the violence of the cold with difficulty even in the valley.

No country in the whole of our globe possesses in proportion to its size, an extent of sea coast

* Theophrastus, Hist. Plant. Lib. viii.

equal

equal to that of Greece. The shores are cut every where into gulfs, more or less extensive, and with so many indented windings they resemble a leaf of the plane-tree or vine. To this strange appearance is joined an astonishing inequality of surface, throughout the whole country. The district of Thessaly alone contains thirty-four considerable mountains; and at the bottom of its numerous gulfs, and valleys, the different currents of air circulate like rivers in their beds, without any perceptible deviation. From repeated observations, made at Athens in our days, it appears, that towards the autumnal equinox, when such gusts of wind begin to be most violent, they affect to a great degree the whole nervous system.* In this we perceive what ancient authors have reported concerning the pernicious effects produced in the environs of Athens, by that current of air from the north-west, which the Greeks called *Sciron*.†

The influence of this fatal wind, so much dreaded by the Athenians, was only perceptible in particular places, immediately subjected to its invariable course. Pliny assures us, that the *Sciron* was a local phenomenon, altogether unknown in Bæotia, in Phocis, and all the rest of Greece.‡ Strabo supposes, that it originated in the form of a whirlwind amongst those shoals,

* *Observ. sur le Levant par Mr. Riedesel.*

† Seneca, Quæst. Nat. lib. V.

‡ Hist. Nat. lib. II.

called the *Scironite Stones*, on the coast of Megara. But at this day we are infinitely better informed relative to their source and progression.

In the very gulf of Corinth an astonishing mass of air begins first to be concentered, and afterwards proceeds along the inflections of the coast until it reaches the isthmus. Two huge rocks there bound the only passage, and the compression they occasion forces the Sciron perpendicularly on the surface of the sea, where, by a violent re-action, it is directed with increased violence to the coast of Attica.

The story of Theseus having tossed into this place a supposed robber, called *Sciron*, was undoubtedly a personified phenomenon; for the fall of the wind, and the emotion of the sea, at the space of contact, are still obvious there.* This is the only place in Greece where the winds are known to take such a direction; for descending apparently in a direct line from the bosom of the clouds, they resemble those water-spouts, or columns of vapors, so well known to mariners on the ocean.

As the Athenians were affected by every change in the atmosphere, they dreaded greatly the im-

* *Wheler, Voyage de la Greece*, Vol. II.—No part of Attica was more immediately exposed to the Sciron than the Academy. The great unhealthiness of that famous gymnasium had its source in this phenomenon joined to the proximity of a vast burying ground on one side, and a quantity of tile-kilns on the other, while rows of plane-trees, planted too closely, prevented a free circulation of air.

pressions

pressions of cold; and were always attentive to the state of the sky, the direction of the wind, and the nature of the clouds. They remarked also the periodical arrival and departure of the swallow, the stork, and principally the kite, to which they rendered a kind of religious worship, by bending the knee whenever it appeared.* As the flight of such birds of passage was wonderfully regulated by the temperature of the air, the return of the genial weather was certain whenever they ventured over the Propontis, in crossing from Asia to Europe. It is not therefore surprising that the arrival of those harbingers of the fine season should affect agreeably the imagination of a rural people, suffering from a long continuance of ice and snows.

The Athenians, by dint of application to meteorology, became such adepts in this art, that they could predict with certainty all changes in the atmosphere of the low country. The two summits of mount Hymettus, in proportion as they were charged, more or less, with vapors, indicated rain or dry weather, and served, says Theophrastus, as a natural barometer.†

The mounts Brilessus and Parnes announced only the approach of storms accompanied with thunder. To conceive this, it should be observed, that unless during the north-east wind, called *Hellespontias*, abundant rains were un-

* Aristophanes, and his Scoliast on the Comedy of the *Birds*.

† Theophrastus, *de Signis pluviarum*.

known in Greece. These mountains, therefore, forming a semicircle, opposed to the principal shock of the atmosphere, attracted the electrical matter, and fixed the vapors before they were sufficiently condensed to descend in showers. All these circumstances afforded prognostics equally certain with those now obtained by the most ingenious and perfect instruments.

The air in Attica was in general exceedingly dry, and from this quality alone the ancient edifices there have resisted the attacks of time and the continual efforts of ages, better than those of any other country either in Europe or Asia. The interior of Athens presents still a delicate monument of the Corinthian order, with little apparent decay, although two thousand years have elapsed since the blocks of white marble, with which it is constructed, were quarried in the side of Pentelichus. So perfect is its present state, that Mr. Stuart has succeeded in explaining the bas reliefs, sculptured on the frieze, representing the mythological adventures of Bacchus.*

The astonishing preservation of such a fragile work, composed of so many isolated and prominent parts, cannot be attributed to any other cause than the dryness and purity of the air. This has indeed been often noticed by the ancients; and Cicero seems to have considered it as the creative principle of the subtile genius of the

* Stuart's *Antiquities of Athens*; and le Roi's *Ruines des Monumens de la Grece*.

Athe-

Athenians. But the actual state of things demonstrates in the most evident manner, that every influence of that nature is lost on human abilities, unless they are directed by the action of moral causes. When once philosophers and learned men disappear in any country, as they have done in Greece, it must necessarily be invaded by barbarism and superstition; in the same manner that briars and thorns spring up in fields no longer cultivated.

Of all trifling publications the most insignificant is a pretended *Voyage litteraire de la Greece*, by Mr. Guys, of the Academy of Marseilles, proposing to prove, that the modern Greeks are nothing inferior to those of former times. Such was the chimerical opinion of a man, who, from having traded at Constnatinople, imagined himself qualified to judge of nations, without even calling to his aid the torch of philosophy.

It would be difficult to find expressions descriptive of the state of degradation, into which the Greeks are now reduced; and evidently by their own folly. The Turks, who have spared their monasteries, would never have deprived them of schools, had they been anxious for their preservation: but fanaticism alone was the cause of all their misfortunes, and their own hands have fastened the folds by which they are blinded.

Occupied alone in reading legends, and disputing about absurdities, they neglected the elements of trade, of arts, and of sciences, un-

til their conjectures in Theology rendered them absolutely childish. So far from being excited by patriotism, or the love of glory, they are now a burden to the earth, and a disgrace to their ancestors, whose very tombs they neither know nor remember.

Yet Mr. Guys dares to affirm, that the modern Athenians, although plunged into such degradation, have the ear so delicate as to preserve by tradition, the true pronunciation of the Greek language. This would prove, according to his system, that from the influence of climate, their organs were endowed with this extraordinary flexibility and precision.* To demonstrate the absolute falshood of such a ridiculous and absurd assertion, it is only necessary to observe, that of seventy jargons, which are now spoken in Greece, that of the Athenians has been judged, ever since the year fifteen hundred and eighty-one, the most corrupt and barbarous. This is even admitted by the Greeks themselves, and could not have happened otherwise; for, towards the end of the thirteenth century, a dialect of French was generally used by the vulgar at Athens, and it extended even into Asia, after the Franks had taken Constantinople.† Never then was any writer more unfortunate than Mr. Guys, either in his assertions, or the

* Voyage litteraire de la Grece. Tom. I.

† ΠΕΡΙ ΔΕ ΔΙΑΛΕΚΤΩΝ, ΤΟΥΤΩΝ Δ' Α'ΠΑΣΩΝ Η' ΤΩΝ Α'ΘΗΝΑΙΩΝ ΧΕΙΡΙΣΤΗ. Letters of Zygomalas to Crusius.

* Du Cange Prolegomena to his *Glossary*.

proofs

proofs with which he has endeavoured to support them.

To this literary journey succeeded the *Voyage pittoresque de la Grece*, the preliminary discourse to which contains such strange paradoxes, that all possible pains have been taken to suppress it, even in France, where such ideas were first conceived. The author there addresses himself to the Muscovites and Hungarians, intreating them to render the modern Greeks independent; and from that instant, continues he, they will become as celebrated as in the days of Pericles.* Yet some men of that nation have acknowledged, that, should this independance be accomplished, the first exertion of their political liberty would be employed in provoking a grand religious war. In the course of such an event, the pretended Orthodox, and the Schismatics, would endeavour to exterminate each other, for words they could neither understand, nor even pronounce with propriety.

There is not among us, said they, a single man professing to be religious, who would not suffer death rather than practise such an art as statuary, which, according to the infallible decision of the Caloyers of mount Pentelichus, is a most heinous idolatry. This certainly appears very different from what marked the days of Pericles, and still more those of Aristotle: but civil disorder, ignorance and superstition have

fixed their roots too deeply there to be removed by any human power.*

Thus the author of the *Voyage pittoresque* neither appears to have understood the politics of the Hungarians and Muscovites, nor the nature of that impenetrable darkness which envelopes the minds of the modern Greeks. The climate however in general has undergone no perceptible change, although the winters of Bæotia seem less rigorous than in the days of Hesiod. This proceeds solely from the progress of cultivation in Thrace, before the reign of Archelaus. This monarch, says Thucydides, made greater advances in clearing the country than the eight slothful princes who preceded him, on a throne established under the shade of thick forests. Little doubt therefore remains that the savage state both of Thrace and Macedonia, about four hundred and fourteen years before our Era, must have greatly augmented the degree of cold on the whole continent of Greece.†

Amongst others a number of sacred groves, dedicated to different divinities, were then cut down, which formerly had been left to decay under the hand of age, unless shattered by strokes of thunder. Lightning indeed was attracted thither by such natural causes as are easily ex-

* Discours preliminaire du Voyage pittoresque de la Greece.

† Theophrastus mentions, that the improvement of some lands around *Philippi* had occasioned a considerable change in the climate.

known

plained; for, besides the sulpher and nitre produced by the blood of so many victims, it is well known that when woods are abandoned to nature, without being thinned periodically, the air becomes highly inflammable.

Superstitious institutions, therefore, apparently so indifferent, not only influenced the climate, but likewise favoured the increase of game, and rendered the extirpation of beasts of prey impracticable. On this account the Athenians could never free themselves from wolves and bears; and they still exist amongst these mountains already spoken of under the general name of Diacri.* The only species of animal now extinct in Greece is that of the frizzled lion; and its haunts were chiefly in Tempe, or, as Pausanius observes, around the whole of mount Olympus. This beast of prey resisted the piercing colds of Thrace, and from thence made incursions even into ancient Germany in chase of the auer-ochs, or wild buffalo. But with the progress of civilization in those countries, the race of northern lions has been so completely destroyed, that no appearance of them remains at this day in any part of European Greece.

* Spon, Voyage de la Grece.

END OF THE DESCRIPTION OF ATTICA.

SECT.

SECT. II.

ON THE ATHENIANS.

I.—PHYISCAL CONSTITUTION OF THIS PEOPLE.

HAVING made known, by so many obsevations, the internal state of Attica, and the nature of its climate, we shall now endeavour to analyze the frame and constitution of its inhabitants.

The Athenians, says Isocrates, are not to be distinguished from the other Greeks by an advantageous size or any superior force of body: but no nation, in that part of the world, ever produced men of such extraordinary beauty. Plato could not speak without enthusiasm of Demes and Charmis; and when Pyrilampus, says he, was sent as ambsssador of the republic to the east, neither the court of the Persian emperors, nor all the ancient continent could produce a mortal so perfect.*

Socrates among his disciples had three Athenians, Xenophon, Critias and Alcibiades, who eclipsed the most beautiful of their age in Greece. Xenophon in particular, having the bloom of youth, possessed a form so seducing, that according to Diogenes Laertius, it could not be described

* Dialogue entitled *Charmis*, or on *Temperance*.

by

by words. Some others have likewise been cited by Æschines at a later period than the Peloponnesian war, who, so far from appearing to have degenerated, were perhaps superior to their ancestors, and surpassed beyond contradiction every thing among the Greeks.* That class of Athenians, elevated by birth and fortune, could alone boast of producing these extraordinary men: for those, who were employed from their infancy in the fleets of the republic, contracted a depression immediately below the vertebral column, where the greatest effort is made in the attitude of rowing; and they could easily be distinguished from the other inhabitants. The mythologists of Greece imagined, that this deformity had been transmitted by Theseus to the Athenians; but their *stone of sorrow* was in reality nothing more than the benches of the galleys.†

Nature had endowed the Athenians with a subtility in their optical organs beyond what ours have ever attained. From the promontory of Sunium, says Pausanias, they discern the plumes of the helmet, and the very point of the spear, which belongs to the colossial statue of Minerva, in the citadel of Athens; although in a strait line near thirty miles distant. Thus the poets and mythologists have less exaggerated

* Æschines *against Timarchus.*

† The comic poets invented the term of ΑΙΞΩΝΥΤΟΙ for the Athenians who had this defect. Scholiast of Aristophanes on the *Knights.*

than

than was supposed, when they asserted that the vessel of Theseus, when returning from Crete, had been seen at such a distance displaying black sails and mourning, instead of the flag of victory.*

The Athenians could distinguish the principal parts of the temple of Jupiter in the island of Ægina; and the Æginians those of the Temple of Minerva, which Pericles had constructed in the center of Athens. The distance between these objects was about eighteen miles; and the latter from its white marble, assumed the appearance of a luminous body, when at noon it reflected the rays of the sun, towards the west. Greece seems to have been created expressly for the advantage of architecture, because in no part of the world could edifices be placed in so strong a light, or in such picturesque situations.

Xenophon believed that the continual exercise of hunting in some cantons occasioned the utmost extent to the view of which it was susceptible.† This opinion has since been verified by so many observations on different people, occupied in similar pursuits, that it no longer appears doubtful. Xenophon however did not know that the continual tension of the optic nerves, in discovering game at great distances, contracted the form of the crystal, and rendered the hunters incapable

* *Linquitur Eois longe speculabile prora.*
Sunion, unde vagi casurum in nomina patri.
Cressia decepit falso ratis Ægea velo.
Statius, THEBAIS XII.

† ΚΥΝΗΓΕΤΙΚΟΣ; or, *Treatise on the Chace.*

of

of discerning objects immediately around them.

Whatever may have been the cause, it is certain that the Greeks in general posessed the faculty of sight in greater perfection than any other of the senses; and to this may be attributed their astonishing progress in all arts depending in any way on the accuracy of design. The Egyptians, on the contrary, who had weak eyes, could never attain mediocrity, because it was impossible for them to seize exactly, the contour of animated bodies. They persevered without advancing in the least towards perfection, and the elegant forms slipped, as it were, from under their pencil.* The superior construction of these organs may be considered as a national characteristic, distinguishing the Greeks from other nations. In none of the different races of men scattered on the earth from the country of the Esquimaux to the Terra del fuego, and from the coast of Africa to the islands of the South Sea, does the globe of the eye appear so large, and its orbit so extensive, as among the Greeks. It is not extraordinary, says Winkelman, that ever since Homer's time, an idea of the most sublime beauty has been affixed to this favor of nature; for a great light, continues the same author, is certainly preferable to a feeble ray. But the Chinese and Japannese by establishing maxims totally opposite to this, demonstrate evidently that the tastes and pleasures

* The Treatise on Eastern Painting may be consulted, which is inserted in my *Recherches sur les Egyptiens et les Chinois*.

of

of mankind are never determined by forced similitudes. As the women in these latter countries contrive to render the eye apparently smaller, by contracting the diaphragm of the eye-lid, some have suspected that an artifice existed among the Greeks for producing a contrary effect. But it requires only a superficial knowledge of anatomy to conceive, that such an operation would have affected the adjoining parts, and chiefly the lachrymal glands, in such a manner as to produce an irremmediable deformity.

It is a circumstance equally remarkable and surprizing, that, while the territory of Athens abounded with men, whose corporeal faculties discovered the highest degree of perfection, no age or situation ever produced women there who were celebrated for beauty.

Negligence in dress, unsupported by any natural graces would have weakened, if not totally destroyed those charms which were necessary to unite the sexes. With a view of correcting abuses of that nature, a singular magistracy was established at Athens, to superintend the dress of the women, and constrain them to appear decently. The rigor of this tribunal was extreme: it imposed the fine of a thousand drachmæ on those who neglected to adorn their hair, or discovered carelessness in their clothing; and the names of such persons were afterwards exposed on tables to public view. Thus the infamy attending the transgression, exceeded even the enormity of the penalty;

penalty; for women, whose names had appeared in this catalogue, were lost for ever in the opinion of the Greeks.*

This severity, instead of being useful, produced an evil entirely unforeseen. To avoid such disgraceful censure, every species of ruinous luxury was introduced; and the women, adopting the most extravagant modes, carried particularly the use of paints to an excess hitherto unexampled among civilized nations. It became, in fact, a perfect disguise, and confounded in public places, the most profligate courtezan with the respectable matron, as Xenophon has exemplified in his Economica.

The eye-brows and lashes were blackened by different procedures, and the cheeks and lips coloured with the juice of a plant, called *Lythospermum Tinctorum* by botanists, which communicates a carnation paler than carmine. On all occasions of ceremony, a coat of white lead, covered every face and breast without distinction, unless in time of mourning, and rules of exemption even then were not always respected, as appears by the Pleadings of Lysias.†

* The author of *the Spirit of Laws* is mistaken when he pretends that this tribunal had any inspection over the morals of the women. For in fact it extended only to their dress; and Mr. Montesquieu has evidently confounded the *Gynecocosmes* of Athens with the *Gyneconomes*, who were always members of the Areopagus, and alone exercised the right of censure on morals.

† Lysias *against Eratosthenes*.

Never

Never did a more marked difference exist among all the varieties of the human species, than between the women of Attica and those of Circassia. The pure complexions of the latter owed nothing to art; and in the market of Caffa in Crimea, they had to undergo many trials in the presence of purchasers, to prove that their charms proceeded alone from the bounty of nature.*

The learned have always imagined, that the women of Attica had no other view in the cruel mode they had adopted of squeezing up their bodies than that of rectifying the shape. But on considering the practices of those Greek merchants, called *Andrapodocapeloi*, we are led to suppose some more particular object. It was observed, that all female slaves, destined by them for the rich and voluptuous, had their hips compressed with knots of cord and bandages.†

Several naturalists are of opinion, that, in the southern parts of Greece, the islands of the Archipelago and Asia Minor, the women are subject to uncommon effusions. Indeed the greatest anatomist of our age has discovered, that this singularity affected even the very configuration of the bones, as appeared by a skeleton he had

*Kleman, *Voyage en Crimée.*

† The Slave-traders, called by the Greeks *Andrapodocapelei*, exercised on men the art of jockies. It appears that they first introduced among the Italians the use of stays, made of pieces of lime-tree instead of whalebone.

received

received from the Levant.* Many individuals of these countries would have escaped excruciating pains in child-bearing, had not the conſtruction of their robes augmented the danger of bringing forth, as well as that of being born. Yet all such attempts must have availed nothing, for when a certain peculiarity, proceeding from the nature of climate, affects the human frame, we may be assured that its influence is unchangeable. Galen says, that in his time it was necessary to circumcise the women of Egypt; and the same necessity still exists there; neither are tumors in the neck become less frequent among the inhabitants of the Alps, in the course of twenty centuries.

The virgins of Athens could never have supported the torments inflicted on them, under pretence of correcting their organization, had not care been taken to diminish the necessary effects of the nutritive juices. Dioscorides assures us, that not only the sad precaution of frequent fastings, but likewise astringent and ferruginous powders were employed, to prevent the bosom from growing too large, in consequence of the excessive compression of the waist.†

* Camper, *Solution d'un probleme proposé par la Societé Litteraire de Rotterdam.*

† Dioscorides, lib. V.

These details are sufficient to prove, that all was artifice and constraint with the women of Athens, while the men issued from the hands of nature endowed with all the graces, such as Autolycus has been represented by Xenophon. Plato describes Charmis like a star in the firmament, surrounded constantly by a crowd of admirers; while the name of Demus, the son of Pyrilampus, was inscribed on the porticos of the town, and the façades of the houses, to transmit to posterity the fame of such an accomplished mortal.*

II.---CORRUPTION OF INSTINCT IN THE GREEKS.

To discover the causes of what is commonly called depravity of instinct among the Greeks, it is sufficient to reflect on that caprice of nature which, withholding favors from one sex, where they were absolutely requisite, lavished them on the other without necessity.

It has been erroneously believed, that the first sparks of this illicit flame made their appearance

* The words ΚΑΛΟΣ ΔΗΜΟΣ were every where written at Athens, and the Latin translator of Aristophanes, not being able to understand them, has imagined absurdly, that this alluded to some canton of Attica. This inscription signified nothing more than that Demus, son of Pyrilampus, surpassed even his father in beauty.

in

in the shade of the Gymnasia, where a strict police originally prevailed, and no disorder gained admittance, while the laws of Solon were respected as they deserved. Although this wise legislator had the utmost aversion to shed human blood, yet he restricted the Athenians, on pain of death, from entering those places destined for the exercises of youth, or even the schools where children were taught to read. Perfectly acquainted with the genius of the men for whom his laws were composed, and knowing exactly to what spheres their virtues as well as vices extended, he exhausted his wisdom in precautions. In case, says he, that such persons as dare to intrude there are not constrained immediately to withdraw, the chiefs of the Gymnasia shall be considered culpable, and may themselves be accused as the corruptors of youth.*

Thus a system evidently fallacious has been introduced relative to this matter; and so great mistakes originated alone from a total ignorance of the laws of Solon.

Long before Gymnastic education was introduced among the Greeks, many traces of the passion we have mentioned, were already remarkable, and extended not only to the heroes of Homer, but even to those of mythology.

Yet the origin of mythology, from its great antiquity, was no longer known, while Gym-

* Æschines *against Timarchus.*

nasia had been instituted recently, and their date could easily be ascertained.* Thucydides remarks, that no considerable period had elapsed since the Lacedæmonians first appeared naked at the Circus. This practice, introduced originally at the foot of mount Taygetus, was afterwards adopted at the Olympic games, where spectators experienced, at times, the effects of a burning furnace. Towards the summer solstice, when the sun darted all his rays into the valley of Pisa, the air became so ardent that many people were suffocated, and among others the philosopher Thales.† An accident of the same nature took place in the valley of Cressa, at the foot of mount Parnassus, when multitudes of people were assembled to celebrate the Pythian games. It is not then surprizing, that the lightest garments were an incumbrance to those who disputed the prize of the course, or contended in pitching the quoit or the bar; but they became altogether insupportable, when an emulation for glory excited the wrestlers to such obstinate exertions, that they were entirely covered with sweat and blood.

Memoire sur l'epoque de la nudité des Athletes, in the collection of the academy of Inscriptions. This cuſtom first took place between the 70th and 80th Olympiad.

† Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Thales*.—One of the ancients has declared that he preferred being condemned to work in the bake-houses of Greece, to the pain of frequenting the Olympic games.

The

The nakedness of the Athletæ could not affect the modesty of a people generally accustomed to public baths. This factitious virtue, frequently at total variance in northern and southern countries, assumes a thousand different forms, either from caprice or climate; and its dominion, when apparently most established, is liable to be overturned by the slightest shock of fashion or prejudice.

That the Greeks were sensible of the cause of their error or depravity, may be concluded from this single circumstance, that never in any country of the world did female perfections excite so much enthusiasm as in Greece. Whenever a beautiful woman appeared there, an event indeed not common, her name was in every mouth, from the extremity of Peloponnesus to the confines of Macedonia. The fermentation spread like a contagious flame; husbands could no longer be restrained by the caresses of the most tender wives, nor sons by the threats of imperious mothers. The whole nation was prostrate at the feet of Lais; and while Greece triumphed over the armies of Persia and the treachery of Sparta, it was totally subdued by a courtesan of Sicily.

It is well known to what a degree Aspasia became illustrious, and how many honors were conferred on Phryne during her whole life; but the pomp lavished on the memory of Pythonice,

according to Dicearchus and Pausanias, surpassed every thing. They had seen her mausoleum between Athens and Eleusis, and did not hesitate to declare that a more superb monument never appeared in Greece. Yet Plutarch insists, that by a fraud frequently practised on such occasions, the inspector had retrenched many of the intended decorations, in order to diminish the expence; otherwise the tomb of Pythonice, whose only merit was her beauty, might have rivalled the wonders of the world.*

What has been attested by historians, concerning the Greeks in those times, gives an air of probability to many circumstances related of them in former ages by their fabulists. Instead of being guided by facts, which are certainly the best authorities, Montesquieu has preferred the opinion of Plutarch, who denies that the women of Greece ever excited the real passion of love. Yet the whole of that country was covered with monuments attesting strongly the contrary. Did the traveller approach from Asia? There he discovered a strait rendered famous by the destiny of Leander; and when departing towards Europe his attention was called to the dreadful precipice of Leucas. From this fatal rock so many lovers, still more rash than unfortunate, threw themselves into the foaming surge of the Ionian sea, there to terminate an existence no

* Plutarch, *Life of Phocion*; Pausanias; and Dicearchus cited by Athenæus.

longer

longer supportable, and avoid the light which despair had rendered hateful.

All these instances indeed relate only to Mythology; but it must be allowed that those, who invented such strange fables, were most probably well acquainted with the violent and ungovernable passions of the Greeks. Endowed with the most piercing organs of sight, the smallest imperfections became obvious at the first glance, even in those beautiful strangers by whom they were most captivated. Some modern travellers have been induced by curiosity to visit the islands of the Archipelago in search of that perfection of female beauty, supposed to exist where Grecian blood was purer than on the continent. Instead of finding at Samos and Crete such mortals as Lais or Phryne, they saw, to their surprize, that the women there were totally neglected by nature; and without even regularity of features, they appeared much inferior to the daughters of the north in elegance of shape, and brilliancy of complexion.

The dress of the women in the islands of the Archipelago, is even more disagreeable and ridiculous than that of the savages of Otaheite. Tournefort has presented us with an accurate drawing of the clothing used in Myconia, which exhibits nothing but a tissue of vain and confused objects without either intelligence or taste.* Yet this

* *Relation d'un Voyage du Levant.*

mode, adopted in very distant ages, does not appear to have been affected by any change of ideas in the course of many generations, and Melos furnishes at this day evident marks of the indecent garb formerly in use among the virgins of Sparta. The inhabitants of that island, originally Lacedæmonians, had adopted the customs of the capital; and although subdued by the Athenians for some time, yet at the conclusion of a general peace the Melions were re-established in all their Doric autonomy.

One of that class of travellers we have mentioned, to account for his disappointment on landing in the islands of the Archipelago, accuses the Venetians and Turks, with having adulterated the pure blood of the ancient Greeks. * Had that country influenced beauty so strongly as he pretends, it would have been insensibly reproduced, and the efforts of nature must in time have prevailed over a momentary confusion. In Asia Minor, where repeated mixtures have taken place with Phenicians, Persians, Romans, Arabs, Tartars, Franks, and Turks, the human species preserves a decided superiority over the inhabitants both of the islands and continent of European Greece. This difference necessarily existed also in former times; for the climate of Ionia was neither so rigorous, nor subject to such variations as that of Peloponnesus or Attica. The aver-

* *Observations de Mr. Riedesel sur le Levant.*

sion

sion of the Athenians for negligence in female dress was expressed in the language of the country by the word *Acosmos*: and every kind of artificial beauty seems to have been held in detestation. Lucian, either expressing his own sentiments under a feigned name, or communicating in reality those of another person, gives us to understand, that the astonishing profusion of medicines, of paints and cosmetics, employed in replacing the defects of nature, became truly disgusting.* Such excesses in drugs of every kind produced a sort of universal mask, at once tiresome to beholders, and fatal to sentiment. Terence has expressed this uniformity of air and countenance by a happy word borrowed from Menander, † whose comedies, particularly that called the Mysogyne, would have cast much light on the obscure matter we now propose for consideration.

III.---DISPOSITION OF THE ATHENIANS AND OTHER GREEKS TOWARDS MELANCHOLY.

The Athenians invented the term Mysogyne, to define a class of men, who, like Euripides, vented continual imprecations against women, or fled from their sight with Melanion to inha-

* Lucian in the ΕΡΩΤΕΣ, or *Loves*.

† ——— *Deleo omnes dehinc ex animo mulieres;*
Taedet quotidianarum harum formarum.

EUN Act. 2d.

bit

bit the most solitary recesses of the desert, like wild beasts, renouncing at once all obedience to civil ties and the laws of nature.* Timon fixed his abode among the steep rocks of Paralı, and there, in a position almost inaccessible, the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages were wont to conduct travellers to his tomb, on their way from Lampra to Phaleris.

The more this singularity, so striking in the history of mankind, is considered, the clearer it appears, that the misogynes and misanthropes were attacked with a malady nearly of the same nature with that called *Nymphalepsy*. It was a fit of melancholy which led them to seek those places where they could indulge their gloomy reveries; and they often concealed themselves for this purpose in such deep grottos as that lately discovered on the south side of mount Hymettus, between Athens and Sunium. This appears to have been originally nothing more than an ancient quarry sculptured on all sides with rude figures, by a certain Greek called Archidamus; and the very inscriptions still seen there attest clearly that his disorder was a Nympholepsy.†

* Aristophanes, comedy of *Lysistrata*.—What Suidas and other such compilers have related concerning Timon the misanthrope, is for the greater part fabulous. Aristophanes is the most ancient author who mentions him as inhabiting a secluded spot, instead of living in a tower in the neighbourhood of Athens.

† Chandler's *Voyage in Greece*.

It

It is probable that Euripides was likewise subject to attacks of this nature; for Philochorus assures us, that, retired to the island of Salamis, he composed his tragedies in a dark and dismal cavern.* We may therefore reasonably suppose that the tone of misanthropy, which reigns in his works, was occasioned by the gloominess of the place where his ideas were conceived.

The inhabitants of Smyrna pretended, that Homer composed his Iliad in a grotto of the same kind, at the source of the river Meles. Without endeavouring to discuss the dubious traditions of the Smyrneans, we may rely with confidence on the testimony of Horace, who affirms, that the poets of antiquity shunned the residence of towns, and composed their verses in the solitude of the forest.† From all this it may be inferred, that the poetical enthusiasm of those times was nearly allied to melancholy; and we are led to observe, that Bœotia, the cradle of poesy in European Greece, contained two mountains very remarkable for their influence on the genius of the inhabitants.

Citheron, dedicated to the Nymphs, had the reputation of inspiring nympholepsy, or that lowness of spirits which degenerated easily into

* Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*; and Gyraldus in the *Life of Euripides*. This circumstance indicates besides that he was born in the island of Salamis; but nothing prevented him from being inscribed in the canton of *Phlya*, as has been pretended.

† *Scriptorum chorus omnis amat nemus, et fugit urbis.*

madness,

madness, and a superstitious fear of the gods. It is very probable that on an eminence separating the winds, the rigor of the atmosphere alone was sufficient to produce this effect, by penetrating the nerves, and contracting the muscular system.

Helicon, sacred to the Muses, had a position still more northern, and excited that kind of affection so difficult to be defined, which was called *Musolepsy*. The blood and vital spirits, forced to the head during these paroxysms, produced what was called genius in the great poets, folly in those who were inferior, and when ungoverned and void of art, it was fury.

Hesiod, born on the slope of mount Helicon, experienced at times such sad and gloomy moments, that Ascara, his native country, was to him insupportable, even in summer; and he often wished, as we learn from his own words, never to have seen the light of day among such men as his cotemporaries. To account for this it must be known that, towards October, the Helicon, now called *Zagara*, is enveloped in a mass of exceeding cold vapours, while its summit supports a load of snows as ancient as the universe: at least no proof exists that they were ever sufficiently dissolved to discover the rocks by which they are sustained.

From this chain of observations it may be concluded, that such persons among the Greeks, as

possessed

possessed naturally weak constitutions, were rendered more subject to melancholy by the impression of certain currents of air; like the Sciron of Attica. The symptoms produced by the Sirocco, among the modern Neapolitans, are of a similar nature; and the inhabitants of the island Eubæa, according to Theophrastus, gave the name of *sadness* and *mourning* to a current of wind descending from the eternal snows that covered the summit of Olympus.*

The qualities of the different fountains, celebrated in the history and poesy of Greece, have been examined in latter times with considerable attention. It is now certain, that the waters of the Hippocrenes in Bæotia, and the Castalia of mount Parnassus, proceeded entirely from the dissolution of snow; and fittered through nitrous and calcarious substances, they became painful even to the hand from their excessive coldness. Those who drank of them in the heat of summer experienced a chilliness, succeeded by a feverish heat, which might readily be considered by those who were ignorant of natural causes and effects, as an inspiration of the Nymphs, of the Muses, or even of Apollo.†

* This wind was called in Greece *Olympias*.

† The pretended river Permessus is only a torrent formed by the melting of snow on the Helicon towards the end of spring. It is very natural that its water should occasion feverish fits, such as Doctor Chandler experienced on drinking of the Castalian spring.

Aristotle

Aristotle assures us that all the Athenians of genius, without excepting either Socrates or Plato, formed a class of men both livid and melancholic, who either inherited such complexions, or acquired them by their obstinate studies.*

Independent of the busts and statues of the ancient philosophers, which are mostly imaginary, we have received from the Greek authors sufficient characteristics of the gait and figure of these extraordinary men.

They were all, as Socrates is described by Aristophanes, remarkable for a paleness of countenance, in contrast with the dark shade of their beards and hair. The orbits of their eyes and the bones of their cheeks were prominent, and the whole body lean and shrivelled; yet little subject to sickness, they attained a great age, and preserved to the last moment a sound and vigorous judgment in a tissue of organs apparently very delicate.

It is said that Zeno, while uncertain of his vocation and destiny, had the curiosity to consult the oracle of Delphi on the plan he ought to pursue. A constant endeavour to resemble the dead, replied the priest of Apollo, is the only way to insure happiness: and this absurd enigma alluded to the general appearance of the philosophers. Yet these men often lived during an entire century; and the torch of genius, which

* Problems. sect. XXX. No. 1.

lighted

lighted them to the tomb, was more brilliant than that of ordinary men, even in the vigor of youth. Theophrastus at the age of ninety-nine years composed his *Characters*. Were it not for such a confeffion from himself, they might be taken for the production of a young man full of gaiety and fancy; for they exhibit a tone of humour which baffles every attempt to imitate them in the different languages of Europe.

The ancients fancied that the great age of the philosophers, who inhabited the vicinity of Athens, was a consequence of some particular regimen.* Yet the diet, prescribed for them by Pythagoras, was rejected unanimously as a ridiculous and absurd system. Neither would they be subjected to general and invariable rules of living, so unsuitable to different constitutions: but each individual by studying his own frame, became acquainted with the different aliments it seemed most to require.

They were besides inaccessible to those mental perturbations which are no less mortal than diseases; and seated in the shade of their gardens, they smiled at the pursuits of fanatical and ambitious men, who are shaken like reeds by every breath of passion. Never did peace abandon their minds; each day produced a new festival; and the solution of a problem was with them a subject for rejoicing.

* Lucian, *Hist. Macrob.* and Censorinus, *de die natali*.

The

The Athenians in general lived to a greater age, and were evidently more healthy than the other Greeks; perhaps from being exempted by nature from those disorders occasioned by worms in the folds of the intestines.* In Bæotia the inhabitants were exceedingly afflicted by such insects; which rendering life and sensibility insupportable, have no small influence both on the physical constitution, and moral character of nations. No naturalist, however little informed, is ignorant that vermicular diseases produce alternate fits of inconsolable sadness, convulsive laughter, and extravagant dancing; such immoderate bursts of clamorous joy, perfectly similar to the effects of narcotic and intoxicating drugs, are always succeeded by a depression of a lethargic nature.

This striking difference between two nations, so nearly alike in point of situation, arose from the qualities of the water and the peculiar manner of living they had adopted. The Bæotians, who possessed a fertile country, extensive pasturage, numerous flocks, and great variety of domestic birds, rendered themselves famous for an astonishing voracity. They frequently dined several times in one day, and partook, says Polybius, of more than thirty feasts in a month. The inhabitants of Attica, on the contrary, with re-

* Pliny, Hist. Nat. lib. XXVII, and Theophrastus, Hist. Plant. lib. IX.

spect

spect to diet, were the most frugal people on earth. Constrained by the sterility of their soil to convert every animal substance into food, they neither despised the flesh of the ass, nor the mole; and the very grass-hopper and locust were served up at their ordinary repasts.*

The Diacrians, as we have observed, depended on the chace, and the milk of their flocks for subsistence. But the indigent citizens, and the armies of the Republic were reduced in time of war to live on salt fish, dried fruits, and a kind of grain called the barley of Achilles, which was supposed says Lucian, to fortify the optic organs.

IV. CONCERNING THE DEGENERATION OF THE ATHENIAN FAMILIES.

Whatever aptitude this people may have discovered in cultivating the arts and sciences, yet Aristotle assures us, that amongst them genius was far from being hereditary in the same families. They all experienced, according to him, a sudden degeneration; and he cites, among other instances, even the children of Socrates and Pericles, who were destined to stupidsty and obscurity.† To reason with precision on this matter,

* Aristophanes, Comedy of the *Wasps*; and in that of the Acharnæans.

† Rhetoric, lib. II.

it would be necessary to suppose, that the order of filiation was never deranged by illegitimate and furtive connections, in a country too where conjugal faith was the weakest tie, and the most fragile of all chains.

At Lacedæmon, says Plato, the Ephori keep the queens closely watched, that the blood of their sovereigns may not be contaminated with that of a slave, a priest, or a mule-driver. Yet these precautions did not prevent two kings of Lacedæmon from attesting by oath, that the children of their wives were spurious, nor deter Alcibiades from grafting a new race on the stem of the Heraclidæ, Scarcely had he arrived at Sparta, when a queen became enamoured with an exile, who wandering in Greece without country or home, was possessed of nothing on earth but his genius and his beauty.

These examples, and a thousand others of the same nature, could not dissuade the Greeks from an ostentatious and absurd display of their genealogies. They were as obstinate in this point as the Jews themselves, who placed an entire confidence on what was the least calculated for being ascertained, particularly in a country where the infidelity of the wives was provoked by the libertinism of their husbands.

Independent of furtive mixtures, that degeneration announced by Aristotle, so far from being peculiar to the inhabitants of Greece, has since been

been observed in most of the civilized nations of Europe. Genius often shines in certain families, like those fires which rise suddenly during the night amongst marshy grounds. But it soon disappears, never more to return, and experiences a fate similar to what is ascribed by Sappho to virginity.

Many observations respecting Spain and Portugal attest, that the noble families there are constantly the most stupid; and those of several other countries would be added, if examined with the same attention. But without having recourse to the consequences of a vicious education, not to be confounded with physical causes, this fact may be explained by very simple reasons. Let it be supposed, that in some small country fifty persons without common understanding have adopted a rule of marrying invariably in each others families. Imbecility must then become hereditary, and little advantage could accrue to the state from their progeny. Such clans, like certain fruit-trees, would require the infusion of a foreign sap, to correct their degraded qualities, and render them useful.

Continual wars, and the introduction of domestic slavery, tended more than all other causes to change the blood and character of the Athenians.

From so many battles, says Isocrates, both by sea and land, of which some were gained, and

others lost, what consequences have arisen! All the reputable families have descended into the tomb, and the state is re-peopled with men who are only nominally Athenians, or of a class not to be mentioned.

It will be necessary here to consider at some length the practice of this kind of slavery, and indicate the countries where such crowds of men were bought to be transported into Attica. Arriving there with foreign manners, a strange religion, and new prejudices, they were easily corrupted by a state of servitude, and in their turn infected the vitals of liberty.

The Athenians were so generally connected with the women they received from Asia Minor, that, in the time of Pericles, five thousand citizens were computed to be the offspring of this illicit intercourse.*

The beautiful female slaves were first freed from bondage; and acquiring gradual influence, they frequently became mistresses in the very houses where they had been bought for servants. The mother of Themistocles was a Carian; that of Demosthenes a Scythian; and a woman of Thrace gave birth to Iphicrates and Timotheus. Yet, however necessary it may be to cross the race and mix the blood of different nations, all extremes should be avoided; for whenever the the action of causes in such changes is too pre-

* Plutarch, *Life of Pericles*; and Philochorus in *the Attics*, cited by the scholiast of Aristophanes on the Comedy of the *Wasps*.

cipitate

cipitate, the effects they produce are terrible. In the time of the lower empire, Constantinople was inhabited by a jumble of not less than twenty five nations; and never did the earth exhibit a more perverse generation. The capital of the Christian world was then the scene of every abominable crime, and its sovereigns were monsters, whose vices could only be equalled by the infamy of their subjects.

Circumstances nearly similar produced at Rome that pusillanimous and despicable populace, described by Amienus Marcellinus with so much energy of style. From such ancestors are descended a class of men, who, assuming the titles of eminence and excellency, are only anxious to hoard up riches, and feast on the bread of idleness.

V.—GYMNASTIC GAMES.

We have now to explain how far the constitutions of the Athenians, and of the Greeks in general, were influenced by gymnastic institutions.

Never were any inventions more pernicious than these, which seemed expressly calculated to enervate the human race. Galen, in a treatise composed for the purpose, as well as by a thousand arguments scattered among his works, refutes in a clear and convincing manner every thing that a certain Theon had advanced in their favor.

Among modern writers, some have been weak enough to justify this usage, although reprobated by the greatest physician of antiquity, who spoke of what he had not only seen, but studied with the greatest minuteness; while they were comparatively blind men, guided only by the thread of a false system.

Those, who exerted themselves in wrestling and boxing, became remarkably lean and slender from the loins downwards; but their upper parts acquired prodigious size and strength. The incessant practice of running and leaping, as Xenophon observes,* had the effect of augmenting the strength, and thickness of the legs and thighs, to the detriment of the rest of the body. It is easy to conceive, that the nutritive juices were necessarily conducted to those parts, which were accustomed to the greatest and most continued efforts.

The ancients have not spoken of any symptoms peculiar to the DISCOBOLES, or those who threw enormous quoits to great distances. Yet we may be assured, that with them the carnosity of the arm became monstrous, and the neck so inflexible, that they could not turn the head from one side to the other without difficulty, owing to the compression of the vertebræ in such exertions.

* In the ΣΥΜΠΟΣΙΟΝ, or the *Banquet of Socrates.*

Nothing

Nothing could be more imprudent than exciting children to those violent races in use at Olympus, and all the solemn feasts of the Greeks. The impetuous shock of the atmosphere was capable of wounding their tender organs of respiration, and occasioning disorders of the lungs, the cure of which was as little known in those days as at present.

To those who observe that such exercises taken in moderation must have been useful, it may be answered, that this was impossible, because they were founded on a spirit of emulation, which in its nature is incompatible with restraint. No medium existed between conquering and being conquered: each effort led to a greater, and the antagonists were equally enervated by a defeat or a victory. For one wrestler, who became famous, thousands either perished in the attempt, or, from being totally maimed, were rendered useless to themselves, and burthensome to society.

The nervous system of man is only susceptible of a certain degree of tension, and by endeavouring to encrease this, we only gain on one side, to lose on the other. Thus the wrestlers and runners augmented the force of particular members, to the detriment of the whole; for the equilibrium of the bodily powers was destroyed, to promote what, from being only factitious, degenerated speedily into weakness.

Montesquieu says, that the exercise of wrestling gave the victory to the Thebans in the

battle of Leuctra; but he did not attend to the period, when this event took place, which was in the hundred and second Olympiad. Two centuries had then elapsed since the Lacedæmonians began to practice the same art; and yet they were completely defeated; because the genius of Epaminondas, and several other particular causes supported their enemies. The skill of the Thebans in this exercise did not prevent them from being totally vanquished soon after at Cheronæa, or made prisoners by Alexander, and sold as slaves to the highest bidder. The very ground, once occupied by Thebes, was ploughed up; and a people, who had never applied themselves to wrestling, could not have experienced a more humiliating and dreadful catastrophe.

In the study of History, it is always prudent to judge of events by their consequences, rather than their causes, which are often conccaled in a night of obscurity. To prove effectually the excellence of Gymnastic institutions, the author of the Spirit of Laws should have demonstrated that Thebes was never destroyed, and that the Theban name was not effaced from the list of nations.

The Macedonians, who were constantly styled barbarians by Demosthenes, possessed strong nerves, joined to a certain degree of good sense; and without practising such exercises, they defeated the other Greeks almost in every battle.

The

The Beotians, the Phocians, the Spartans, the Athenians, and in fact all those who opposed themselves to the armies of Macedonia, were borne down like corn before the scythe of the reaper.

The Roman militia, who knew not even the word Gymnastic, began their march in the morning with an entire confidence of vanquishing all the Greeks who should oppose them; and this was at a time when the latter had rendered themselves enervated by their efforts to become invincible.

Even supposing that excesses, such as we have stated, did not occasion deformities; yet those violent perspirations, which were the unavoidable consequence, could not fail to weaken the human frame, by depriving it of the juices necessary for its preservation. Consequently, as Galen attests in a most positive manner, no physician, since the time of Hippocrates, ever approved of the frame, constitution, or regimen of the Athletæ.*

It is really absurd to place, as some people have done, the opinions of such a writer as Lucian, in competition with the authority of all the physicians of Greece. That author, in a dialogue he composed on Gymnastics, ventures, through inconceivable ignorance of ancient history, to introduce Solon as the most zealous

* *Exhortation to Arts.*

partizan

partisan of the Athletæ, although he was their most invariable enemy.* He reduced almost to nothing their recompences; and taught the Athenians that it was infinitely more advantageous to employ the money of the state in providing for orphans, than to nourish a race of men who were equally useless in peace and war; for those people, as Euripides declares, were the worst soldiers in Greece.

It has been hitherto generally believed, that the combats of the Roman gladiators exhibited scenes of greater cruelty than the contest of the Grecian wrestlers; while in reality the one was not more revolting than the other.

The wounded gladiators were often cured by the aid of skilful surgeons, and many of their lives were saved by Galen at Pergamus, his native country. But it was impossible to restore those members which were torn from each other by the athletæ. Deprived of eyes, teeth, nose, chin, and ears, they frequently resembled men who had escaped from the paws of a leopard or a tyger.†

What can be imagined of a more atrocious nature than to see naked champions, stained with blood, and bruising each other with guantlets, until their features were so effaced, that they

* Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Solon.*

† Anth log. lib. II.

could

could not be known by the mothers who had brought them into life.*

Isocrates assures us, that such an infamous profession was embraced only by a vile populace of the different towns, who, from never having acquired other trades, were forced to become conspicuous in this painful manner †

The races produced nearly similar effects on the horses with those experienced by human beings in the Gymnasia. They were totally enervated, through the whole extent of Greece, because from the folly of employing them before they had attained maturity, a single exertion was sufficient to ruin them for ever.‡

The breed of horses in England has been greatly injured by the races at Newmarket, and others of the same nature. There however, it is not customary, as among the Greeks, to bring foals into the lists; otherwise not one capital horse would now be found in all Great Britain.

Pindar, speaking of a race at the Pythian Games, relates, that forty chariots were shattered to pieces, and as many drivers overturned on the arena, or, as Sophocles expresses it, shipwrecked on the earth.‖

* ANTHOLOG. lib. II.

† ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΖΕΥΓΟΥΣ.

‡ Foal races were first introduced in the 99th Olympiad; and it does not appear that the Greeks ever opened their eyes on this abuse. Pausan. ELIA.

‖ ΠΥΘ. and the *Electra* of Sophocles.

All

All this signifies, in other words, that a great number of men and useful animals were destroyed there, without the smallest advantage to the state. Many were crushed to death in an instant, and others languished under tedious sufferings, exhibiting all the horrors attendant on war, amidst the amusements of peace.

The inhabitants of some parts of Africa, and of the island of Sicily, possessed an excellent breed of horses. Whenever numbers of cars arrived at Olympus from Cyrene, Syracuse, or Agrigentum, it was almost certain that the prizes would be carried off by strangers. In such matters the Greeks indeed exercised a secret policy; and it will appear in the sequel of these Researches, that Commerce was the main-spring not only of the Olympic games, but of all others in Greece. Yet nothing was more calculated to confound virtue, and discourage merit, than the great degree of importance and glory thus attached to the dexterity of coachmen. This art was in itself nothing, but depended on the muscles of their horses; while the maintenance of these animals brought ruin on many families both in Peloponnesus and Attica, and proved at last the most pernicious of all luxuries.

By such contests however the Athenians were less affected than the other nations of Greece; because, as Xenophon says, they applied themselves with less ardour to the exercises of wrestling

ling and running, which were not considered as essential to naval occupations. But, as we have already observed, the continual labor of the oar destroyed the bodily proportions of the inhabitants of Attica; and from such facts we may infer, that agriculture is best adapted to render mankind robust and healthy. In this happiest of situations all imaginable advantages are united, without producing either that distortion peculiar to the rowers of Athens, or those deformities which characterized the athletæ of Elis.

VI. STATE OF POPULATION AND DOMESTIC SERVITUDE IN ATTICA.

In every recorded period, the calculations of the Athenian politicians have concurred, as Plato says, in computing that the republic ought to be composed of twenty thousand citizens. On comparing different enumerations made at sundry periods, it appears, that population remained nearly in the same state under Pericles, Demosthenes, and Demetrius of Phaleris, who were successively Demagogues, and placed at the head of the administration. In these calculations women were not included; but supposing them equally numerous with the men, it would appear, that the individuals of every age, who could be considered as forming the people of Athens, both in Salamis and Attica, amounted to forty thousand.

When

When wars or maladies occasioned any diminution of this number, it was completed by conferring the freedom of the city and the rights of naturalization on strangers. On the other hand, any excess of population was obviated by establishing colonies, or re-peopling conquered islands, where a portion of land was distributed to each person.

Diodorus Siculus must have been very ill informed, when he undertook to explain in what manner the republic of Athens had been reformed by Antigonus; for, on the death of that prince, the number of male citizens amounted to twenty-one thousand. No essential deviation could therefore have taken place from the determined number of free men, who were to compose this Democratic state, without admitting either increase or diminution.

These ideas are very different from what so many writers have inculcated concerning population, as if their object had been to encrease the number of beggars, and add to the sufferings of the wretched. But instead of rejecting such detestable systems, politicians have received them with joy. It is necessary, say they, to have men sufficiently multiplied, to pay our taxes in peace, and shed their blood in war; and to this is now reduced the science of a minister of finances. But sentiments so repugnant to generosity can never meet the approbation of philosophers,

philosophers, who are persuaded, that one hundred families at their ease, on a square league, are preferable to three thousand negroes on an acre.

Each soldier, at once poor and ill-treated, is necessarily disposed to desertion, and consequently ought not to be counted among the defenders of the state. It is this spirit of disaffection, which will ever occasion the downfal of despotic governments, whatever may be their state of population. Thirty thousand Macedonians conquered Persia; forty thousand Moguls subdued India; and the empire of China, containing forty millions of inhabitants, abandoned its sovereign, and submitted to fifty thousand Tartars. In our own days, the army of the grand Visier deserted almost to a man in the vicinity of Warna. Never did the Turks discover more good sense than on this occasion; for surely their tyrants did not deserve that one drop of blood should be shed in preserving the dominion of men, who discovered the rapacity of robbers.

When an excess of taxation has so far increased public misery, as to affect the vitals of of the state, it is no longer in the power of despots to prevent desertion by punishments. Those men, who are exposed to the vexations of financiers, and destined by generals to the carnage of battles, are not to be intimidated by examples

examples of severity: their courage will be displayed as deserters, but never as soldiers. Desertion, on the contrary, was unknown among the Athenians. Incapable of assembling more than ten thousand national troops, they depended on their allies and tributaries to complete their army. In cases of emergency, mercenaries were procured from Crete, Thrace, and other such places, who likewise were faithful to their colours, through fear of degrading their profession. It was a policy with the Greeks, as well as with the Romans, to distribute only half pay among the auxiliary troops; and by reserving what remained until the termination of the war, they were in some measure insured against desertion.*

When Demosthenes undertook the military department, and the general administration of the Republic, he ordained, that all armies employed in distant expeditions, should consist in part of national troops. The lowest proportion he admitted was a fourth of the whole, both in cavalry and infantry.†

Such a regulation leaves room to suppose, that, in former times, their wars had been carried on by auxiliaries alone, or perhaps with a few citizens, who acted with them as officers. Indeed the Athenians were so partial to com-

* Vegetius *de R. M.* lib. II.

† Demosthenes, *Philip.*

merce,

merce, that they preferred infinitely the pleasures of business to those of a camp; and Demosthenes had to exert himself in proving, that trade required to be protected by a military force. You judge of public prosperity, said he, by the quantity of merchandise displayed in your streets, without considering that Philip of Macedon, with a troop of robbers, may surprise you in the midst of your traffic.

The account rendered by Pericles of his administration, which is one of the most authentic documents in Grecian History, certifies, that on the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, his army amounted to thirty one thousand eight hundred men, including cavalry.* Whatever such ill informed writers as Diodorus Siculus may advance to the contrary, this was certainly the highest point ever attained by the land army of the republic of Athens; and when it was thought more advantageous to augment the navy, even that number was considerably diminished. Under the demagogue Lycurgus, the naval force of the nation, amounting to four hundred triremes, could be assembled in the three basons of Piræus, which now would not contain forty ships of the line, even supposing the harbour was restored to its ancient state. †

* A plan of Piræus, taken geometrically, may be seen in the *Description of the Gulph of Venice and the Coasts of the Morea*, by Mr. Bellin.

† Thucydides, war of Peloponn. lib. II.

Hence we may infer that their triremes were not equal in size to our sloops of war; and directed entirely by force of rowing, they required such a crowd of galley slaves, that scarcely any space remained to receive combatants. This defect was common to all the military fleets of antiquity; and could not be obviated while the practice existed of navigating chiefly with oars.*

As the citizens of Athens could not exceed twenty thousand, a number insufficient for cultivating the country, exploring mines, and improving manufactures, it was necessary to introduce domestic servitude. Slaves were therefore purchased wherever they could be found; and the great numbers offered for sale reduced their price to such a trifle, that it would be impossible, at this day, to procure negro children for such small sums on the coast of Melinda. Xenophon speaks of some who were sold at Athens for half an attic minæ, or somewhat more than thirty shillings each person.† But those who had acquired a trade, or could be employed in the more laborious parts of manufactures, were generally valued at five minæ, or fifteen pounds sterling.‡

The countries, which furnished such multitudes of victims, were principally Thrace and Macedonia; but those procured from the latter were less esteemed, according to Demosthenes,

* Polybius says, that the largest Roman vessels could not carry more than 120 soldiers; while they required 300 rowers.

† Xenophon, *De Fact. & Dict. Socrat.* lib. II.

‡ Demosthenes, in the first Pleading against *Aphob.*

that

than all others. After these should be reckoned Dacia, now Moldavia, the country of the Getæ or the modern Bessarabia, little Scythia at the mouth of the Danube, and Cappadocia, where the princes, disposed of their subjects with as little ceremony as the Caciques of Angola and Congo. Numbers were likewise procured from Mysia, Phrygia, Caria, and finally from Syria in the pre-eminence of which originated the general name of *Syrus* for men-servants, in the same manner that a female slave was called *Thressa*, because the greater part were natives of Thrace. Among so many people of different nations, exposed to public sale, not one Egyptian ever appeared, although, during the most remote periods, many negroes were collected for this traffic. The sooty coloured race seem, at all times, to have been expressly created for servitude, and yet they are often more respectable than their masters.

All the manufactures of Athens were carried on by the hands of slaves; and Thucydides reports, that more than twenty thousand, good workmen, of that denomination had deserted during the war of Peloponnesus.* It would appear at first view, that such a disaster must have ruined for ever the commerce of Athens; but the great facility of replacing them in all the unfortunate countries we have enumerated, rendered this loss imperceptible in the course of a few years. Demetrius of Phaleirs, in

* Lib. IV.

the year three hundred and nine before our Era, calculated that not less than four hundred thousand slaves existed on the territory of Athens, including men, women, and children. *

Admitting the medium price for these slaves in general to be four minæ, their total value will amount to five millions sterling; a sum considerably larger than the estimate of all the lands in Attica, as will appear under the article of finances, copied from the registers of the Censors.

If we except the wretches employed in the silver mines, whose fate was truly deplorable, all the slaves were treated with so much humanity, that Xenophon has ventured to blame it as excessive. † But this declaration was made when he had already abjured the maxims of his own country, to adopt those of the Lacedæmonians, who treated the Helotes in a manner revolting to human nature.

The Athenians possessed too much prudence and sensibility to insult a class of men, by whom they were supported, and whose number so far exceeded their own, that they could not have slept in safety, had that indulgence to their slaves been refused, which was so justly merited.

* Athenæus, and the anonymous author of the description of the Olympiads have committed a great chronological fault, when they pretend that this enumeration was made by Demetrius in the year 340 before our Era. Meursius has not even perceived this gross error. Demetrius was not Archon at Athens until the year 309.

† Treatise on the *Republic of Athens*.

In

In the Greek comedies a remarkable tone of familiarity subsists between masters and their slaves, who very frequently conduct the plot, and occasion an uniformity much disrelished by modern authors. The ancient comic writers may indeed, with reason, be accused of abusing this character, by introducing it so frequently, while other recources presented themselves evidently more grand and sublime. The same error, however, cannot be imputed to Aristophanes, who seldom made use of servants; but they became in some measure necessary from the plan of the new Grecian comedy, and particularly in the compositions of Menander, if we may judge from the translations of Terence. With regard to Plautus, his subjects are in general collected from the poets of Sicily, a country where the Valets were great buffoons and liars; two qualities notorious in all ages among the Sicilians.

Some exaggeration indeed has been apprehended, relative to the four hundred thousand slaves, said to be employed by the Athenians. But such objections can only arise from want of information, concerning the extent of commerce and manufactures in Attica. The merchant vessels, wrought by oars alone, required a multitude of men for navigation, while thousands were occupied in tilling and watering the fields, or exploring the copper mines at Colonos, or the veins of silver around Sunium.

The

The nature of domestic service among the Greeks and Romans employed more hands than are required by our modern usages, because they have no analogy whatever with those of antiquity.

Civil Architecture has been influenced in its very principles, by the abolition of Slavery. The doors of common habitations are now fewer in number, and all those inclosures and partitions become useless, which were formerly constructed to restrain libertinism among the slaves, and above all, to prevent them from escaping. The interior arrangement of the Greek houses, where particular apartments were allotted for men and women, was conformable to the usages of domestic servitude. Mothers of families had the inspection of female slaves in one quarter, while the males, in another, were under the immediate discipline of their masters.*

The philosophers in the environs of Athens were neither metalists, nor manufacturers; and their numerous slaves discover how much the Greeks required attendance. Long lists of servants names are still found in the last wills of Plato, Aristotle, Theophrastus, and particularly of Lycon, who, after having lived in great splendor at the head of the Peripaticians, be-

* *Economic.* of Xenophon.

queathed

queathed a considerable property in a will regarded by the Greeks as a masterpiece. Not less liberal at the moment of death, than during the course of a benevolent life, this philosopher set his slaves at liberty, loaded them with presents, and had his fortune equalled his generosity, he would have bestowed legacies on all Greece.*

These discussions explain fully in what manner the Athenians employed such a number of men, whose industry, like a vast capital, afforded a regular and considerable interest to the possessors. Demosthenes informs us in his pleadings, that the workmen of his father's manufactures brought daily a certain sum to their master, deducted from the produce of their labor.

The object, in treating of such institutions, is only to display the spirit by which they were actuated, and not by any means for their justification.

The peculiar situation of Greece rendered the abolition of slavery impossible; because to effect such a purpose, a similar sentiment would have been requisite in the whole of its Republics. The very opposite of all this was notorious. What the Athenians desired, would never be admitted by the Lacedæmonians; and while the latter continued the bondage of the Helotes, to augment their strength, the other

* Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Lycon.*

states dared not to sacrifice the only support of independence, by setting their slaves at liberty.

As no Athenian could assist at a National Assembly, until he had attained his thirtieth year, the number of citizens, collected there, seldom exceeded eight thousand. Solon had even calculated, that six thousand citizens, united in the public place, were sufficient to exercise all the legislative functions, because they could be considered as representing the whole nation.* But previous to any decision, on a point of such importance as that of declaring war, it was necessary to invite all the inhabitants of Attica, in a more particular manner, to attend the diet. They were divided into larger and smaller cantons; some, like Acharnæ, were possessed of considerable power; while others, such as Halimæ, did not contain more than sixty citizens who could vote in the deliberations of the state.†

The manner, in which the nation had been forced by Pericles to take refuge within the walls of the capital, was the real cause why population encreased suddenly to four hundred thousand persons, including slaves, although its ordinary state exceeded not one eighth of that

* Sigonius and Ubbo Emmius, de Repub. Athen.

† Demosthenes *against Eubulides.*

number.

number. The greater part of these people were either lodged, as we have seen, in unwholesome huts erected for a momentary resource, or forced to seek shelter under the porticos of the temples and public edifices. There, during the heat of summer, they experienced that disease vulgarly called the *Plague of Athens*; but by modern physicians, such as Haller, it has been considered as nothing more than a contagious fever.* To seek in Ethiopia the origin of a disorder, so evidently arising from multitudes of men heaped and pressed together, would be absurd; especially as its influence did not extend beyond the walls of Athens, and was totally unknown in every other part of Greece. Similar effects would now be produced in any town where the particles of the atmosphere are entirely changed, by being charged with different noxious effluvia, as frequently happens in fleets, or among great armies encamped in too close order.

To remedy such inconveniences, the republic caused separate entrenchments to be erected for five different cantons. These were Aphidna and Rhamnus in Diacri; Eleusis on the frontiers of Megara; Sunium in Paralı; and Phylé on mount Parnes, where the ruins still remain in the form of an hexangular redoubt. From this precaution it was no longer necessary, in time of war,

* Biblioth. med. pract.

to

to collect the whole nation, as formerly, within the ramparts of Athens, or the walls of Piræus, according to the system of Pericles. Sufficient asylums were now established for protecting the citizens, who were dispersed on the frontiers; and in case of an invasion, a severe police constrained every person to remain within the limits indicated by the magistracy.* The hunters alone, says Xenophon, have some times permission to exceed the general line, in order to destroy the bears and wolves, which would otherwise desolate that country.

It was attested, in the time of Demetrius of Phaleris, that the number of strangers, established at Athens and its dependencies, amounted to ten thousand individuals. When these are added to the citizens and slaves, a totality will result of four hundred and fifty thousand persons, on a territory of two hundred and twenty square miles.

This summary evinces in a clear manner, that Attica was beyond comparison more populous than France. According to the calculations of Mr. Necker, each square league of the latter is supposed to contain a medium of only nine

* Demosthenes, ΠΕΡΙ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥ. The inhabitants of Attica, who were more than 120 Stadia from Athens, had to take refuge, in time of war, at the five places here mentioned. The others retired with their effects to Athens, or within the long walls of Piræus.

hundred

hundred persons. In the former upwards of four thousand were computed on an equal space, and the soil there was not superior to that of Provence; neither were the Phellian plains more susceptible of cultivation than those beds of sand and gravel which extend from Arles to Salon.

Although the population of Attica was in a great measure factitious, yet unremitting industry and prodigious resources were necessary for the subsistence of such multitudes of slaves employed in manufactures, and depending on an ungrateful soil. In no part of the world, therefore, was the vigilance of administration distinguished by more activity and solicitude. The Areopagus did not blush to examine frequently the state of public forests, and count even the olive-trees planted along the great roads. These precious trees, consecrated to Minerva, were exactly registered, and whoever dared to injure a single trunk was liable to be chastised in a most exemplary manner.* When the Areopagites themselves descended to such minute details, we may suppose that no less diligence prevailed among the subaltern magistrates, and they were besides so very numerous that it was almost impossible for any disorder to escape their notice.

* Lysias pleading before the Areopagus concerning the *sacred Olive-trees*.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

SECOND PART,

SECT. III.

ON THE MANNERS OF THE ATHENIANS.

I.—PROGRESS OF CIVILIZATION, AND THE JUDGES OF THE THEATRE AT ATHENS.

In proportion as the Athenians aspired to freedom, they discovered a greater aversion to inhabit the capital, and wished to remove themselves at once from the formalities of the police, and the empire of the people. Amidst those vallies and mountains, where their country-houses were scattered, they had no contest to apprehend, either with the Areopagus, or Senate; and the petty magistrates, called Demarchs, who presided in the villages, were of too little consequence to affect the tranquillity of noble citizens, in the midst of their possessions.

Such isolated dwellings, shaded with vines and olives, were certainly calculated to inspire vivacity; but refined politeness is incompatible with the simplicity of rural manners.

Neither must it be supposed, that the urbanity of the Athenians was disclosed at once, like a full blown

blown flower; for it resembled these tardy shrubs, which afford no fruit to the generation, by whose care they are planted.

All the inhabitants of Attica were never collected within the walls of Athens until the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, about three hundred and forty one years before the present Era. It has been already observed, that the country people were then compelled by the devastations of the Lacedæmonians, to take refuge in the capital; and this concourse of multitudes occasioned an extraordinary revolution in manners, behaviour, and social ideas. The shock of virtues and vices, in so great an assembly of men, introduced civilities which had never before been practised, and attentions until then unknown; but still that sublime and difficult art of rendering others pleased both with us and themselves, was far from having attained perfection.

True politeness could not, for a length of time, establish itself at the bar of Athens, where it was assailed by the injurious invectives of Demosthenes, Æschines, and other declaimers; while Aristophanes, and all the composers of ancient comedy contrived to banish it from the theatre, by indecency of action, and scurrility of language. Thus, that soft amenity, produced by genius, and accompanied with good manners, was long confined to the gardens of the philosophers; but the works of Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, and Theophrastus,

phrastus have transmitted its fairest image to le. terity.

As the Athenians advanced in the study of Philosophy, the rudeness they had contracted in the country began to disappear, and the progress of this vicissitude is easily ascertained by comparing their national character at different periods.

Aristophanes is harsh, vulgar, obscene, and often insupportable, as in the drama of Lysistrata; while Menander discovers all the graces, accompanied with the charms of modesty. His first comedy was represented in the year three hundred and twenty before our Era, and it formed a memorable epoch in the annals of Athens.

Sophocles, and Euripides guided by the counsels of Socrates, had, long since, brought Tragedy to a high degree of perfection; but the comic scene required to be equally purified, in order to render urbanity a national virtue, instead of being confined to select societies.

The Athenians had a very singular institution, apparently more calculated to retard, than facilitate the progress of good taste. With them it was neither the spectators, nor the body of the nation in general, who could decide on the merits of theatrical productions. This privilege appertained alone to a sovereign tribunal, formed annually of a certain number of judges, who bound themselves by oath, and called even the gods to witness, that their conduct should be just and severe.

Such

blow dmitted of no appeal, and the
w' pos- were distributed arbitrarily
ets.

ese umpires was unparalleled:
ith disdain the choicest pro-
and Menander, to crown
as were both absurd and ridiculous.
Ælian alledges, that either the judges were blinded with great partiality, or suffered themselves to be seduced by the drachmæ of Attica:* but it appears most probable, that the lustre of the silver was so dazzling in their eyes, that they lost sight of the vain ceremony of promises.

Dionysius the tyrant had a rage, as is well known, for composing bad verses, and still worse tragedies; some of these he got represented at Athens, and by corrupting the judges he was declared victor, to the great astonishment of Europe and Asia.†

It may perhaps now be admitted, as a diminution of turpitude in this tribunal, that all those who presided at the solemn games of Greece, were at least equally notorious for such vices. Neither must it be supposed, that the crowns obtained at Olympus, Delphi, and Nemæa, were destined to recompense any one species of merit; for in these proceedings the Greeks always practised certain subtleties, often very obvious,

* Ælian, *Hist. Divers.* Lib. II.

† Diodorus Siculus, Lib. XV.

although

although sometimes totally incomprehensible. But that which ought to have diminished, or even destroyed, emulation, contributed to inflame the minds of men, who, regardless of obstacles, were determined to vanquish even injustice, by the decided superiority of their talents. Thus Pindar, Euripides, and Menander, although so often vanquished by feeble adversaries, and unworthy rivals, failed not to appear again on the lists, in defiance of the known iniquity of the judges.* That these decisions related only to frivolous amusements, cannot be offered in their excuse; for even trifles were capable of producing dreadful consequences, on men possessed of such exalted ambition and extreme sensibility, that their excessive joy became often fatal when they received the palm, although it had even been obtained through corruption. Two poets, called Alexis and Philemon, expired successively, in full theatre, at finding themselves on the point of being declared victors. Dionysius the tyrant experienced a similar fate from the success of his tragedies; and the Athenians lamented that he had not been crowned twenty

* These pretended judges were called at Athens ΚΡΙΤΑΙ ΕΝ ΤΩ ΘΕΑΤΡΩ, and likewise ΚΡΙΤΑΙ ΕΚ ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΩΝ, as appears by a passage in Æschines. Never were they more unjust than to Menander, who was almost constantly vanquished by Philemon, and other inferior poets. Quintilian terms all their judgements without exception, *mala judicia*.

years sooner, because it would have preserved Sicily from his oppressions.

Further details, relative to theatrical contests, will be found in a section on the Fine Arts; but the order of matter, which naturally presents itself here, hurries me for the present to other discussions.

II.—WOMEN OF ATHENS, AND THE BACCHANTES OF GREECE.

It was likewise towards the commencement of the Peloponnesian war that all the women of Attica assembled within the walls of Athens, began to imitate the graces and obliging manners of the Ionians. Aspasia, born at Miletus, the chief town of Ionia, was the first who introduced Asiatic elegance into Europe; but Athenæus declares, that her disciples were few among the noble dames, and that the courtesans only were eager in copying her dress and manners. This was occasioned by the too great circumspection of the men of Athens, who, sensible of the violence of their own passions, exercised a most scrupulous and distrustful attention towards the conduct of their daughters; and would never permit any of the other sex to enter their apartments, not even to instruct them. The courtesans, on the contrary, by frequenting freely the schools of philosophy, became infinitely more accomplished than the women of quality, who

who probably were equally ignorant with those of Rome. Cicero says, that not more than five or six Roman ladies were capable of speaking correctly; and even the comic poets there, such as Cecilius, frequently transgressed the rules of grammar, in open theatre.

In both ancient Greece and Italy, it was easy to distinguish vulgar people by their manner of speaking; for the languages of those countries were so refined and complicated, that they could only be acquired by studying completely their principles. Quintilian assures us, that the lower classes, at Rome, could not utter a single acclamation of joy without introducing a barbarism; and he complains of difficulties which his scholars had to encounter from corrupt Latin, in the very capital of the Roman world.* From all this we may easily judge what kind of jargon must have been spoken by those women, who never had quitted a place so inaccessible as the *Parthenon*, or appartment of virgins.

Nothing could be more pernicious than this superiority, acquired by courtesans over women, who were in fact modest, but whose education had been so preposterous, that the graces fled from their presence. Having neglected, says Sappho, to gather the roses of the Nine, they shall neither be spoken of during life, nor re-

* *At novitiis nostris per quot annos sermo Latinus, repugnat?* Inst. Or. lib. I.

membered after death; but passing instantly from obscurity to the void of a tomb, they resemble those phantoms, which are supposed to wander in the night, and vanish at the approach of morning.

While the virgins of Athens were guarded so attentively, and almost condemned to similar confinement with those of Asia,* the married women enjoyed a degree of liberty which would never have been supposed, had not Xenophon revealed to the world this secret of Greece. Provided, says he, that peace and friendship continue to reign in houses, every indulgence is discovered for mothers, by sympathizing with all their natural defects; and even when they yield to the irresistible tyranny of their passions, it is usual to pardon the first act of weakness, and forget the second.†

Those who sighed after the blessings of domestic concord, did not think them too dearly bought by such sacrifices; but unfortunately they could not always accomplish their wishes by such excess of compliance; for, in general, unanimity was a stranger in the bosoms of families.

Gorgias, the celebrated sophist, undertook to pronounce an admirable harangue at the Olympic games, in which he exhorted all the states of Greece, without exception, to conclude on a general and perpetual peace. How! said one of

* *Potter's Grecian Archeology, corrected by Rambach.*

† *Dialogue between Hiero and Simonides.*

his

his auditors; can you venture to propose any plan for conciliating such opposite interests? You, whose whole family consists of no more than three persons, yourself, a wife, and one female slave, and yet your disputes are continual, and your very battles so obstinate, that neither the authority of neighbours, nor the entreaties of friends, can avail in preserving tranquility.*

This state of turbulence must have been common to many other families, particularly when they were beyond comparison more numerous than that of the sophist Gorgias.

When Solon, created legislator, was vested with unlimited power in the nation, he became infatuated with an idea, adopted since by some eastern rulers. He fancied that the source of domestic contentions might be destroyed by a civil law, which, regulating the conjugal rites, should insure their performance at three determined periods in each lunar revolution.†

This supposed remedy, instead of contenting the two parties, was satisfactory to neither; and tended only to augment internal discord. As the different litigations relative to this object could not be terminated by ordinary modes of process, the pleaders were subject to every kind of ludicrous and obscene jest, without being able to procure any redress. Such must always be

* Plutarch, *Marriage Precepts.*

† Plutarch, Life of Solon.

the consequence of appeals to a law which is in itself ridiculous; and that of Solon became exceedingly so, because it admitted of no exceptions, either in cases of age, or infirmities. The privilege we have mentioned extended only to those wives who had furnished a considerable dowry to their husbands; and all others were deprived of the supposed benefit of this regulation, which truly discovers nothing of the genius of Solon. Instead of interfering, where all civil cognizance was impracticable, he should have confined himself to the restriction of paternal authority; for the hands of children were certainly subject to too great tyranny, when marriage depended entirely on pecuniary calculations. This arbitrary conduct, still practised at Smyrna and Constantinople, deprived the Greeks of all the enjoyments of a calm and peaceful life: even dying men dictated the future disposal of their daughters;* and when the will of the dead was so powerful, we may imagine how much obedience was required by the living.

The comic poets undertook sometimes to turn such acts of despotism into ridicule, by representing a father bent on some favorite match, which is frustrated by the intrigue of a valet, or the address of a courtesan. But in former times, as

* Different examples be may found in Demosthenes, whose father had bequeathed his widow to one of the tutors of his children.

at

at this day, it was infinitely easier for theatrical writers to amuse spectators, than to correct their vices.

Euripides, who, as we have observed, was a famous woman-hater, imputed to that sex alone all the tempests and discords of domestic life; and he declaimed against them on the open theatre with the greatest vehemence. It is from their evil genius, said he, and the innate perversity of their minds, that the Greeks cannot be accounted a happy people: alas! he added, that nature has not revealed some means of propagating the human species, without subjecting us to the sad necessity of having mothers, wives, or daughters.*

The fits of melancholy, so frequent with this poet, prevented him from making either exact or impartial observations on the manners and character of the Grecian women. That turbulent spirit, of which he complains so bitterly, instead of proceeding from any depravity of heart, should be attributed to four different causes—to the depravity of the men; an illiberal mode of education; too great luxury in dress; and finally, the immoderate use of the heating and violent wines of Greece.

Athenæus exaggerates assuredly, when he describes the females of that part of the world as

* Médea.

universally addicted to drunkenness;* but, at the same time it is known that the debauches of the Bacchantes, or Mænades, were not confined to the lowest and vilest classes of the Grecian women.

Many remarkable occurrences would either have been prevented entirely, or must have assumed a very different appearance, had the culture of the vine been less general in Greece. Considering the inequality of the country, it appears probable, that the vineyards along the sides of the mountains occupied a surface more extensive than all the arable lands in the different valleys.

Jupiter had altars at Olympia, and Apollo at Delphi; but those of Bacchus were universal. He was the supreme deity who inspired both men and women; and without his aid human genius produced nothing extraordinary in Greece.

Aristophanes pretends, that the politicians of Athens practised, sometimes, a similar manner of deliberation with the ancient Germans.† Copious potations, on such occasions, did not fail to produce artificial courage, and render them as fruitful in counsels and expedients as even Nestor himself, when, waving his goblet, he harangued the heroes of the Iliad.

Levity and inconsistency became therefore unavoidable, at times, with the Athenians; but

* *Diipnosoph*, lib. X. † ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΣ,

that

that excess of temerity, with which they have been accused, by the Greeks in general, was less an effect of natural disposition than their political constitution; because it was supposed to afford great advantages over tardy enemies. The fleet of Athens was already under sail, and its army encamped, while other nations debated in council; and wherever an opportunity presented itself, the Athenians did not decline a decisive action, but risked their all at Marathon, at Platæa, at Salamis, and even at Cheronæa. Such is their character, says Thucydides, that they found the most sanguine hopes on the greatest dangers, and are *Euelpides* in all the force of that term, which was used to denote men who relied implicitely on fortune, and painted futurity in the most pleasing colours.

It is proper here to account for those dreadful perturbations of the nervous system, particularly with women, which proceeded from the violent wines of ancient Greece. Such liquors, reduced in general by coction to the consistency of syrups, were afterwards diluted, occasionally, with a proportion of water, not easily determined. Mr. Goguet could not conceive why the Greeks erected statues to the person who succeeded in solving this problem; but that author, as his whole book demonstrates, had no just idea of the Grecian wines. In the time of the poet Alcman, only one small canton of all Laconia

conia produced those wines, called *Apyres*, which were not condensed either by smoke or fire; for through all Arcadia they continued to be reduced into a paste, which could only be cut with a sharp instrument.*

The inhabitants of the Archipelago improved greatly the ancient method of the continental Greeks; but if we except Lesbos, Thasos, and some parts of Crete, all these islands were only heaps of volcanic matter, impregnated with saline and sulphurious particles, which rendered the wines exceedingly pernicious to the nerves.

When the Grecian Bacchantes had quaffed several bumpers of this liquor in a manner peculiar to themselves, called *Amystis*, they were capable of the greatest excesses. They not only excited discord in families, but spread terror throughout the villages from the extremity of Attica to the summit of Parnassus, where they assembled in great numbers; while the Mænades of Laconia held their particular rendezvous on mount Taygetus. The rapid movements of a dance, animated by instruments, on an elevated mode, such as the Lydian, produced a kind of phrensy among these intoxicated wretches, which the learned believe had all the symtoms of a *Nymphomany*. In proof of this conjecture, it has

* Aristotle, *Meteor*, lib. IV. The Greeks Preserved their wines in this manner, because they had no wood proper for making casks.

likewise

likewise been asserted, that those miserable people in Calabria, who pretend to receive relief from music, instead of being injured by a tarantula, are really affected by hysterical passions. This at leaſt is the opinion of a modern traveller, who might easily have misconceived such objects in traversing hastily a country, the language of which he did not understand.* In whatever manner Nymphomany is defined, no circumstance denotes that the returns of the fit were ever regularly periodical; but the Bacchanal feasts could be indicated by the Calendar, and the time was precisely known, when the Thyades of Greece would be drunk. and the very day of the year on which they were to become furious.

All this was called a religious worship: and the legislators, who dared to interfere with such sacred institutions were to expect the indignation of a jealous God, who had displayed his vengeance in the punishment of Lycurgus, and in the dreadful fate of Pentheus. It was thus that mythology supported libertinism against the efforts of reason and philosophy.

Euripides was forced to be very circumspect in his tragedy of the *Bacchantes*; and where so favorable an opportunity presented itself for reproaching the women of Greece, he was afraid to indulge himself, because such an attack might

* Voyage de la grande Grece et de la Sicile, per Mons. de Riedesel.

have

have been construed into Atheism. Only some feeble suspicions have escaped him, relative to the nature of this worship, where he insinuates the possibility of erecting one altar on another, and adoring a goddess in honoring a god.*

In European Greece, it was believed that the women could not, without great danger, refrain from a liquor they had used since time immemorial. At Miletus in Ionia, where the laws prohibited the use of wine among the fair sex,† the virgins, according to report, were attacked with a species of melancholy, which ended in suicide, and threatened extinction to the human race in that country.

No one would be rash enough either to guarantee the truth of what is here related concerning the virgins of Miletus, or the causes assigned for that calamity; but certainly, throughout European Greece, the Bacchanalia appear to have been abuses absolutely incorrigible.

It has been observed by a philosopher, versed in historical antiquities that even previous to the introduction of wine, the Greeks discovered a violent antipathy to water; and this seems applicable to savage nations in general, who have constantly had recourse to some artificial liquor, instead of their streams and fountains.

Before the Athenians had planted the vine around mount Icarus, or on the hills of Acharnæ,

* Tragedy of the *Bacchantes*.

† Spanheim's Commentaries on *Callimachus, Hymn to Pallas*.

they

they possessed the art of extracting something from barley, which resembled the beer of Egypt, and was called *Cicyeon.** This was afterwards preserved solely for celebrating the mysteries of Ceres, when some drops were presented to the newly initiated, in order to convince them, that the present times were preferable to those of antiquity.

The various degrees of strength, communicated to spirituous liquors, were proportioned to the nature of the climate in different parts of Greece; and we are told by the poet Alcman, that the rigor of winter, in the vicinity of Lacedæmon, rendered the use of heating wines absolutely necessary.† But as the ideas of the Spartans were wholly taken up with war, carnage, and devastation, nothing could dispel the gloom impressed on their mind by such horrid pursuits. The Athenians, on the contrary, considered war as the greatest calamity; and convinced that gaiety was natural to man, they encouraged every discovery and invention which could contribute to their pleasures. Plutarch pretends, that the Bacchanalia alone occasioned a greater expence than even a naval armament; and, at these feasts, the poets entered the lists with so many new comedies and tragedies, that the judges of the theatre were infinitely more em-

* Nicander, *Alexipharmæa*; and Clemens Alexandrinus.

† Fragment of Alcman.

employd

ployed than either the Areopagus or Senate. It was there also that the ten tribes of Attica, contended for the brazen tripod, which was to inform posterity of the victorious dancers. When Demosthenes, at this great national ball, had delivered his celebrated harangue against Philip of Macedon, he descended from the rostrum, with his embroidered robes, to dance in the midts of the orchestra. We cannot, said he, sufficiently honor that deity, to whom the north of Attica is indebted for the produce of the vine; and he cited some authentic oracles of Delphi to prove, that the Athenians were under religious obligations to celebrate the feasts of Bacchus with profusion.* Aristotle however did not entertain the same opinion with the priests of Delphi: he asserted, that an immoderate use of wine had occasioned vaporous and melancholic affections, which could never be removed, while the Athenians continued to wear ivy crowns, or hold the cup and the thyrsus.† What relates here to vapors, cannot be disputed; but gloomy ideas frequently arose, as we have observed, from piercing blasts of frozen air, originating on the snowy summits of such mountains as the Helicon. The Greek Caloyers, or monks, who still inhabit that country, are the gloomiest of mortals; and melancholy itself seems to have fixed its abode on

* Demosthenes against Midias.

† PROBLEM.

mount

mount Athos, which is exposed to the violent winds of Thrace.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIFFERENT CANTONS OF ATTICA.

Aristotle, whose whole life was spent in making observations, does not agree in many circumstances with his scholars; and his sentiments are very different from those of Dicearchus, on the progress of civilization among the cantons of Attica.

Aristotle pretends, that whatever might be the pretensions of the Athenians with regard to politeness and urbanity, they were much inferior to the inhabitants of Piræus, whose manners, polished by the continual resort of strangers, had assumed a tone of grandeur and nobility. The merchants, travellers, and navigators, who arrived at this famous port, actuated by a spirit of emulation, were rivals in politeness, because they wished to avoid being supposed barbarians, or descendants of a savage people. Plato, on this account, laid the scene of his favourite dialogues at Piræus, and supposes Socrates to be detained there by the refined and obliging manners of Cephalus, a merchant, who was father to the orator Lysias. It was in the house of this venerable man that the conversation turned insensibly on the best of all possible governments,

and

and gave rise, in this manner, to the republic of Plato, if ever such an edifice existed on earth. Demosthenes likewise preferred the manners of Piræus to those of the capital; but Dicearchus differed from that opinion, although it was supported by the sentiments of his master. He maintained that both urbanity and veracity were confined within the walls of Athens; and he considered the other inhabitants of Attica as dangerous men, experienced in calumny and addicted to deceit.*

Ever since the most remote periods, some of the cantons had been remarkable for certain vices, or mal-practices so peculiar to themselves, that they were considered as a kind of national physiognomy.

The inhabitants of Acharnæ were reputed rough and brutal; those of Prospaltis were famous litigators, or indefatigable pleaders who delighted in law-suits; and at Potamos, the love of money was so powerful, that strangers, by employing this means, found no difficulty in having their names inscribed on the list of citizens.†

* Here are the terms made use of by Dicearchus, to describe the bad disposition by which the inhabitsnts of Attica were distinguished from the Athenians. Ὁι μεν Ἀττικοι, περιεργοι ταις ἀλλαις, ὑποπτοι συκοφαντησαι, παρατηρηται των ξενικων βιων. To explain such expressions, it is sufficient to recollect what has been said relative to the degradation of the inhabitants of Attica from war and domestic slavery.

† Harpocrat. at the word Greek

Cove-

Coveteousness was the ruling passion at Cropia, and Tythras; while Aexone and Gephyra were notorious for all such injurious or obscene expressions as are implied in the Greek word *cacology*. The children in Colyttus acquired the use of speech sooner than all others, because their fathers were the greatest babblers in Greece; and the Athenians, in general, employed more words in one day, than the Lacedæmonians in the four seasons.

Diomeia pretended to be superior to all the cantons in genius and penetration; and Athenæus informs us, that a tribunal of sixty judges was established there, to decide on the essence of jests and good sayings. All witticisms, rejected by these men, were supposed to trespass against some rules of art; and as the words of Pythagoras were the great oath of his disciples, in the same manner did the people at Diomeia swear by the decisions of their academy. Instead of this excessive good humour, it was customary at Sphettos to reply with a certain degree of harshness, which, instead of containing attic salt, was rather the art of turning delicious wines into acids.

Near Cephalus, in the neighbourhood of mount Hymettus, was a fountain sacred to Love, where all the sick had promises, and no one ever obtained relief. Doctor Chandler, in his travels through Greece, informs us, that the young women of Athens perform still an annual pilgrimage

to this scource, which belongs now to a monastery of Caloyers. These greatest of all imposters have added their own subtilties to those of the ancient charlatans of Cephalus, who entertained strangers with many wonderful traditions concerning the adventures of their founder; when carried off by Aurora, said they, he continued to sigh for a mortal in the arms of a goddess. Probably the ancient shepherds of Attica, while guarding their flocks, fabricated such stories for amusement. In the huts of the negroes of Senegal, and under the tents of the wandering Arabs, they are invented still, and seem calculated for pastoral manners in the same degree that romance is adapted to civil life. Unfortunately however these fables in general passed with the Athenians for historical facts; and by this means all their mountains became celebrated, and every river famous.

All the inhabitants of Cydathenæa pretended to be noble; in the same manner that at Rennes the chairmen are descended from the first barons of Brittany. Andocides, the orator, who belonged to this illustrious canton, ventured to assert, before the whole republic, that his family was the most ancient of Athens; and he added, that his house had never been shut against the poor, and was always an asylum for the unfortunate*

* Andocides in his *Harangue on Mysteries*. Hesychius seems to have taken literally all that the inhabitants of Cydathenæa reported of their nobility: he defines the word ΚΥΔΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ by that of 'ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ ΕΝΔΟΞΟΣ.

This

This however was carrying his boasts too far; for in reality no greater cheat or more cunning intriguer ever appeared in Greece, if we except Lysander, the Lacedæmonian.

The people of Corydale, for the most part, subsisted by smuggling, at the expence of the Athenian commerce, and could never be restrained from such practices. At Eleusis every art was employed to deprive the superstitious of their money, and even of their clothes: Brauron was the principal scene of those orgies and bacchanalia, which were so unfavorable to virtue; and Sciron afforded exactly such a receptacle for gamblers and prostitutes, as that which in our days has been established in the forest of Liege.*

The Icarians, who called themselves the inventors of Comedy, were considered as a dangerous race during the bacchanalia; and they were accused of having shed the blood of him who first introduced the vine into their country.†

Megara was inhabited by the worst of Greeks, and the most despicable of mortals; they had even been declared such by an oracle of Apollo, which is still found in the Scholia of Theocritus. This however may be suspected as a calumny of the Athenians, who carried national hatred to a greater degree against the Megareans than was

* Meursius de Populis Atticae.

† Commentaries of Mr. Heyne on the *Library* of Apollodorus.

ever known among people speaking the same language. Time, which changes almost every thing, could not weaken an animosity occasioned at first by the revolt of the people of Megara. They erected themselves into an independant state, little more extensive than that of Saint Marino; but so much superior in power, that they could never afterwards be reduced to their former subjection. One circumstance attending this was highly prejudicial to the Athenians; for when any person either wished to defraud his creditors, or had committed some atrocious crime, he fled to Megara, and received effectual protection.* It is probable that the vices and perverse disposition of so many fugitives were communicated to their protectors, who have been seldom mentioned in history with encomiums.

But if all these little states had particular blemishes, they possessed also many virtues; and Dicearchus himself praises that humanity and politeness, which he experienced on all the great roads of Attica. He proceeds afterwards to assure us, that no corner of the world presents more attractions than Athens, either for the rich,

* Many examples of this may be found in the Harangues of Demosthenes and of Lycurgus. Megaris formed a part of what was called ACTA, or the shore, towards the isthmus of Corinth; and this word, was used to express the whole of Attica to which Megaris undoubtedly belonged. It is erroneously that Cellarius has attempted, in his Geography, to raise doubts concerning this fact.

or those who are absolutely without money. The opulent can procure every thing, continues he, and the indigent are entertained with so many feasts, spectacles, games, and other amusements, that they never reflect on their situation.

Such was that sublime effort of Athenian policy, hitherto disregarded in our present military governments, where the sadness of the inhabitants is only equalled by their wretchedness and poverty. Tossed amidst continuel vexations, they seem exposed on a wreck, where the song of the mariner has ceased, and the music of the passengers is forgotten; but this crisis, instead of being permanent, must at length produce a catastrophe which will confound both sovereigns and subjects.

When the Athenians had neither fleets, armies, admirals, nor generals, they possessed the greatest resources in their industry, gaiety, and commerce. The vivacity of their genius enabled them to see things in a different light from other people; and their rivers as well as mountains were rendered famous by numerous mythological events. Such things, regarded in our eyes as trifling, were to them exceedingly interesting. They believed firmly, that the Muses and Nymphs performed dances along the banks of the Ilissus, which they considered as the finest river in the world, although, in fact, it is only a torrent; and nothing but moss can grow on its borders.

With regard to the Cephisus, says Euripides, nothing is more certain than that Venus repaired thither, frequently, to regale herself with its waters. In commemoration of this, continues he, that goddess, ever grateful, soothes the Athenians with pure zephyrs, and the breath of attending loves, crowned with the roses of Paphos.*

Strangers, on their arrival in Attica, were entertained with such a series of miracles and prodigies, of which they could discover no trace, that they fancied themselves among an enchanted people. At length they were forced, necessarily, either to become enthusiasts themselves, or they grew exceedingly disgusted with the enthusiasm of the Athenians.†

IV.—ON THE EDUCATION OF THE ATHENIANS.

NATIONS become respectable or insignificant in proportion as their governments are wise or vicious; and the Athenians could never have been the most celebrated people on earth, but for the excellence of their laws. The force of education contributed greatly to this effect, although with them it had not attained its most

* In the Choir of *Medea*.

† We find in the fragment of Dicearchus, intitled, ΒΙΟΣ ΕΛΛΑΔΟΣ, the verses of a man who declared he would rather die than be condemned to hear the exaggerations of the Athenians.

perfect

perfect state until three hundred and forty-six years before our Era. Diagraphy, or the study of drawing, was then introduced as an essential part; and as such it has been considered both by Aristotle and Pliny.*

From this system, the Greeks received the greatest advantages. They were taught to distinguish beautiful from incorrect forms, until they could discern, at the first glance, all the merits and faults of whatever depended immediately on delineation. Ignorant artists shrank before such enlightened critics, who inculcated an exact imitation of nature, and discovered every inaccuracy in the productions of the greatest masters.

As this fortunate event did not take place before the days of Pericles, he had no opportunity of acquiring any knowledge of the Fine Arts, either in theory, or practice. Guided by confidential sculptors and architects, he passed for some time as a connoisseur in the opinion of the Athenians; but the temple of Ceres at Eleusis, which was erected after his own ideas, joined to the counsels of ignorant priests, was so destitute of good taste, that people were intirely undeceived respecting his supposed merits. This edifice, supported only by pilasters, destitute of elegance, was an eye-sore to all Greece, until Demetrius Phalereus undertook, for the honor

* Politic. lib. VIII. Hist. Nat. lib. XXXV.

of his country, to remedy as much as possible the original omissions, by adding a range of Doric columns.* It was only after this improvement that the temple of Eleusis, constructed under the immediate inspection of Pericles, could be reckoned among the superb buildings of Attica.

The method of drawing, practised at this day in the schools of Europe, is radically erroneous. Scholars are under the necessity of reducing their models to a small scale; and in this reduction, purely ideal, consists that defect which I pointed out some years ago, when describing the antiquities of Grecia Magna, consecrated to Juno, on the promontory of Lacinium.

The Athenians began the study of Design by copying the human body, in its naturel size, and real dimensions, on tables of box-wood. Thus they had a decided superiority over the moderns, who, in terminating their essays, are forced to return back to the very same point.

Drawings of this nature could not indeed be preserved; and they were intended to be effaced with a spunge, as soon as the professors had indicated their faults. This, however, did not prevent those who were proficients from making others, better calculated for permanency, either on vellum or Egyptian paper.

* Strabo, *Geograph.* lib. IX. The Temple built by Pericles at Eleusis was of that kind which the Romans called *Templum in antis.*

Antient

Ancient philosophers were divided in their opinion with regard to the exact period of human life, when the mind first becomes susceptible of instruction; but this epoch was supposed to be at the age of seven years, according to the general opinion in Greece.

Persons, who only aspired at gathering the superficial or brilliant flowers of literature, in order to appear with some distinction in the world, could attain this with their fourteenth year; as we find by a passage of Homer, who had himself studied at Athens. But those who wished to arrive at the sphere of the sublime sciences, and even penetrate into their sanctuary, were forced to remain very long indeed under the empire and tuition of masters. Æschines the philosopher, to whom the Dialogue, called AXIOCHUS, is commonly attributed, speaks of this as a most painful and thorny state, where despots, says he, succeed each other continually, and not only command with haughtiness, but force themselves to be obeyed with rigor.* He either knew not, or did not consider, that in a republic, where the people enjoyed so much liberty, it was necessary to introduce severe rules in education; without however adopting that tyrannical method, recommended by Chry-

* *Collection of Dialogues attributed to Æschines.* It is evident that these Dialogues are not the productions of Æschines, but of some other very ancient author.

sippus

sippus the stoic, who in all his writings has added the austerity of his sect to the harshness of his own character.

The young Athenians were at first placed under masters of exercise, who were called *Pedotribes*; and the art of swimming was reckoned indispensable in the naval service. The prows of armed vessels in those days, as every one knows, were furnished with huge masses of pointed iron or brass, which, directed judiciously, were capable of sinking the strongest galley. On such occasions, the small boats were insufficient to contain all the crew, and numbers endeavoured by swimming to gain the ships most contiguous in their line of battle. Some ignorant historians have considered a sentence of the Athenians as sanguinary, by which those admirals were condemned to death, who, after having gained a memorable victory, neglected to save the lives of many citizens still struggling amidst the billows. These men belonged to twenty vessels, pierced during the action by the prows of their enemies; and the fleet, hurried by signals to advance, instead of assisting the unfortunate swimmers, had abandoned them to their destiny. This sentence, objected to by Socrates only for its form, was in fact both equitable and necessary; for had such criminal audacity in the admirals been left unpunished, the service of the marine would have suffered exceedingly,

ingly; and on it depended the very existence of the republic.

When the Athenians had finished their exercises in the Gymnasia of the Pedotribes, they passed successively under the direction of the grammarians, critics, geometricians, and those professors, called tacticians. They assumed this name because they taught the art of war, according to certain rules and principles adopted in the army of the republic, with the approbation of its greatest commanders; and among them was Iphicrates, who appears to have been the most able tactician that ever appeared in Greece.

All these trials took place previous to the rural course of philosophy in the gardens of the Lycæum, or of the Academy, which the true lovers of science contrived never to terminate. They remained all their lives attached to the chief of some sect, like Metrodorus to Epicurus; and dying in the schools, they were interred under the shade of those very trees where they had so often meditated.

In all such details, collected, for the most part by Æschines, or the person who had assumed his name, no mention whatever is made of music. We may therefore conclude that it did not, in his time, form any essential part of education, at least with the Athenians, who never indeed had the reputation of excelling in that art. Xenophon acknowledges how little those men were esteemed

ed who devoted themselves to the study of Melody;* and they were even requested to practise elsewhere a talent of so little apparent utility in a democratic government. This was conforming perfectly to those maxims of sound policy which pronounced, that not only a republic, but an empire, might be governed by good laws; but all the music in the world could not preserve peace in a family.

The young Athenians were besides particularly attentive to their beauty; it was considered by them as the choicest gift of nature; and they fancied that such an instrument as the Grecian flute must have changed their features, by communicating a disagreeable swelling to the lips and cheeks. This species of music had formed part of their education previous to the Peloponnesian war; but from the motives we have stated, it was condemned and abandoned, by general consent of the nation.† The dance became so much the more improved, from having some connection with every institution both sacred and profane; for occasions were never wanting of introducing choirs of dancers into the feasts, whether instituted in honor of the god Bacchus, or of the goddess Minerva.

* Treatise on the *Republic of Athens*.

† *Omnium tum Atheniensium consensu, disciplina tibiis canendi desita est.* Aulus Gellius, N. A. lib. XV.

As

As the philosophers, who inhabited the gardens around Athens, did not choose to employ their time in teaching the first elements of literature and mathematics, they admitted as disciples, those persons only who had already made some considerable progress in the schools. But if satisfied with the method of the subaltern geometricians, they could not sufficiently reprobrate that of the grammarians, who formed the most obstinate and incorrigible class in all Greece. They had invented certain defective rules of practice, which they could never be persuaded to renounce; such as that of selecting Homers poems for the first essay of children: they insisted it had always been the mode, and could not be otherwise. From this circumstance the Greeks contracted, necessarily, a decided taste for the marvellous. Their great facility in believing prodigies, and their wonderful aversion to discussing them, produced at length that degree of enthusiasm which makes genius sparkle at the expence of judgment; and, if not all, the greater part of their writers have fallen into this error.

The grammarians defended themselves with arguments more specious than solid. We only endeavor to imitate nature, said they; for the first attempts at literature were in verse; and many centuries had already elapsed before any prosaic work made its appearance in Greece.

The

The most ancient writings of this kind, known to the Athenians, were the decrees of Draco; and from their great obscurity, it was inferred, that the art of writing prose had only then attained a state of infancy.

Nothing was easier than to refute all these idle reasons, by proofs drawn from experience. But even admitting that elementary books ought to be in verse, it would have been adviseable to select those of a moral tendency, such as the productions of Solon, Theognis, and Phocilides. These, devoid of all mythology, were infinitely preferable to the Iliad for all the purposes of education; and they abounded in useful maxims, and admirable sentences, conveyed in a style, which, although not altogether sublime, was very classical. Solon, in his moral elegies, never employed the smallest spark of poetic flame;* and good sense, was substituted in all his works for that enthusiasm so pernicious to children. The first science, with which youth should be made acquainted, is certainly geography; because both reason and common sense point out the necessity of knowing the distribution of apartments, in the place destined for our dwelling. Even the grammarians of Greece were con-

* Many fragments of the compositions of Solon are found in the works of Demosthenes and Stobæus. The first ode of the first book of Horace, is a servile imitation of one of Solon's elegies.

vinced

vinced from experience, that, without the aid of this study, it was impossible for them to explain the Iliad, which they compared to the rising sun; while the Odyssey, in their opinion, was only the twilight of a serene evening.*

These poems must have excited ideas not easily defined in the Grecian children, when they saw the divinities, they had been taught to adore, converted into objects of ridicule. Homer has even described his gods as still weaker, more vicious, and impolite, than the mortals themselves; for Jupiter never addresses Juno without injurious language; and that goddess seldom fails to retort with interest.

Something still more extravagant presents itself in those combats, where the gods, after receiving many cuts and thrusts from the common Greeks, are lodged in the hospital at Olympus; and some time afterwards, they descend, half crippled, to execute some paltry office altogether unworthy of their majesty. When Patroclus was slain by Hector, we find Thetis, the supreme goddess of the ocean, occupied in protecting his carcass from the hungry flies. This has been called the slumber of Homer; but in whatever manner, such marvellous things are defined, they are highly improper for children; particularly at the early age of seven years.

* Longinus, on the *Sublime*.

After

After all this, it is not extraordinary that the philosophers should be much discontented with the general conduct of the grammarians, and more particularly with the manner in which those denominated critics, expounded and commented on the writings of Homer. Many were the reforms necessary for the scholars, on being removed from the direction of such teachers; but those, who embraced the sect of Epicurus, experienced the most extraordinary revolutions. Scarcely had they remained one night in the garden of their master, before all their poetical heaven and hell vanished, like the incoherent fabric of a dream. The inconvenience must be very great indeed, when it becomes necessary to destroy the first part of education, in order to establish the second; and when philosophy must labour in removing an infinity of errors and prejudices, which have wantonly been impressed on the tender minds of infants.

Nothing, says Plato, is more insupportable than those foolish popular opinions, founded alone on the disordered imagination of fanatics and poets. What, continues he, can be imagined more absurd, than the two casks from which the father of the gods is supposed to draw indiscriminately the essence of good or evil, in order to sprinkle mankind; while even the meanest gardener has sense enough to avoid injuring his favourite plants with unsalutary water!*

* *Of the Republic*, dial. II.

Homer

Homer did not deserve, for such ridiculous fictions, to be banished from the republic, but only from subaltern schools, where the magistracy had an immediate inspection. The philosophers, on the contrary, were totally independent; and the people acknowledged this, when the demagogue Sophocles proposed to render them amenable to the senate.

On this occasion, they pursued a mode of conduct, repeatedly adopted in latter times by the parliaments of France: they resigned their functions, and abandoned public instruction, so that without either teachers, or scholars, the state was menaced with total darkness. This contest was carried before the great assembly of the nation, and the demagogue Sophocles was sentenced to pay a fine of five talents, or more than eleven hundred pounds sterling, as a punishment for his ignorance of state affairs.*

Composed mostly of labourers and artisans, chosen by hazard, the senate were incompetent judges of the methods necessary for the philosophers to pursue, with regard to their disciples. The Athenians, besides, would have regretted exceedingly the departure of that multitude of foreigners, collected in Attica by the great reputation of its schools, for the sums of money they expended during their course of education were very considerable.

* Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Theophrastus.*

Thus, on the whole, nothing could be more diametrically opposite to every principle of sound policy than the proposed decree, and no person ever appeared more completely blind than the demagogue Sophocles.

V.—STATE OF THE PHILOSOPHERS AT ATHENS, AND THEIR ASCENDANCY OVER ALL THE OTHER SCHOOLS.

Notwithstanding the death of Socrates, and some other persecutions less remarkable, the Grecian philosophers certainly preferred Athens to all the towns of Europe or Asia. The government was, in their opinion, superior to all others; and they conceived it to be the only spot on earth where the Arts and Sciences could obtain a permanent temple.

Schools of philosophy had been erected in that part of Italy called Grecia Magna; but they soon fell into decay: similar attempts were made in vain at Megara, and they succeeded no better on the territory of Elis. But at Athens all the different sects were perpetuated in the bosom of peace; and the doctrines of Epicurus flourished there publicly during the lapse of six centuries. The emperor Marcus Aurelius indeed favored strongly the dogmas of the Portico; but yet he permitted the Epicureans to instruct all those who were desirous of their lessons.*

* Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists, article Theodotus.*

No

No modern goverment ever equalled, in this respect, the wisdom of the Athenians. To assert that the doctrines of Epicurus ought to be exploded, because they contain some errors, is absurd; for every system is liable to such objections, and many with much more reason. On the other hand, a multitude of men were converted by the Epicureans from fanaticism and superstion, who otherwise must have been victims to the most degrading errors, the dupes of religious impostors, and the sport of designing Oracles.

The dissensions of the noble and plebeian families of Athens were the first cause of that spirit of persecution, which affected some of the philosophers; and the world has hitherto been greatly deceived by imagining, that these misfortunes had any direct connection with philosophy.

In the first place, the nobles, or Eupatrides, persecuted the philosopher Anaxagoras with virulence, because they wished to irritate Pericles, to whom he had been tutor. It was he likewise who advised his pupil to abandon the party of the nobles, at once vain and turbulent, from whom he could expect nothing, and to range himself with the people, whose favor would raise him to the skies with immortal glory.*

Socrates was persecuted by the people in their turn, for having been preceptor to Critias, the

* Plutarch, *Life of Pericles.*

most

most cruel and atrocious of the thirty tyrants, who were all descended from the noble families of Attica.

Nothing can be more precise and decisive than the words addressed by Æschines to the Athenians, concerning this matter. *It is you, said he, who have put Socrates to death, because he instructed the tyrant Critias in his infancy.**

This fact must have been publicly notorious; otherwise no orator would have dared to accuse the nation in a full assembly of having committed a crime, which merited the vengeance of heaven.

When the Athenians, says Plato, are good-natured and humane, they carry these qualities to extremes; but their cruelty is exactly in the same proportion. Yet, on all occasions, they allow themselves to be managed by caresses, or intreaties, unless when tyranny is in question, and then they are the most dangerous and implacable of mortals.

On receiving intelligence that Alexander had expired in a fit of drunkenness at Babylon, the Athenians delivered themselves up to the most immoderate joy ever experienced by any people. All this surely was allowable, on seeing the world freed from a tyrant, who had sworn in

* Æschines *against Timarchus* expresses himself in this manner: ΕΠΕΙΘ' ΥΜΕΙΣ, Ω' ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΙ, ΣΩΚΡΑΤΗΝ ΜΕΝ ΤΟΝ ΣΟΦΙΣΤΗΝ ΑΠΕΚΤΕΙΝΑΤΕ, ΟΤΙ ΚΡΙΤΙΑΝ Ε'ΦΑΝΗ ΠΕΠΑΙΔΕΥΚΩΣ, ΕΝΑ ΤΩΝ ΤΡΙΑΚΟΝΤΑ ΤΩΝ ΤΟΝ ΔΗΜΟΝ ΚΑΤΑΛΥΣΑΝΤΩΝ.

his

his last moments to destroy Athens, as he had done Thebes. But during this popular enthusiasm, some person remembered by accident, that a certain Aristotle, who had once been preceptor to Alexander, still inhabited in the gardens of the Lycæum; and it was only by a speedy flight that Aristotle then saved himself from public indignation.

When the Athenians wished to persecute a man, against whom they had no real crime, he was then accused of impiety; and in all such proceedings it is easy to perceive that spirit of insatiable vengeance, which urged them on to punish masters for the faults of their disciples. No philosopher in the world would be rash enough to undertake the instruction of a child, if his head must answer for the future actions of his pupil, when hazard chooses to make him an emperor, a conqueror, or a leader of banditti.

The education of princes has often been the stumbling block of sages. Even when they imagine themselves at the summit of success, their hopes vanish; for the tree, grafted at the top, cannot always be prevented from shooting anew at the root, and its wild instinct is often too predominant to admit of culture. Seneca, on considering the first acts of Nero, imagined he had formed a god; but experience convinced him, that all poetic hell had never produced a greater monster. Socrates, who possessed infinitely

more sagacity than Seneca, observed at once the impossibility of changing the unruly and savage character of Critias, who could never be inspired with the love of virtue, nor disposed for political equality.

The situation of Aristotle, at the court of Macedon, was still more deplorable; for previous to his arrival there, a certain Leonidas had corrupted the mind of Alexander to such a degree, that all efforts to reclaim him were ineffectual; and the son of Philip was destined, in this manner, to remain an assassin and a drunkard.

In their moments of delirium, the Athenians were blind to reason; and it was surely at those periods alone they could conceive that every preceptor, whose pupil became a tyrant, ought to be persecuted without mercy. The soporific draught, administered to Socrates at the age of seventy years, rendered him more illustrious than all the well-merited statues which were erected to his memory. Previous to this slumber, he was scarcely known to the inhabitants of Attica; and afterwards, his fame extended over the universe.

Nothing is either more astonishing, or more true, than the ignorance of the Greeks, with regard to Socrates, during his life time. Aristophanes flattered himself, that his comedy of the *Clouds* would have met with the completest success, because he professed to have employed all

all the malice of his head and heart in that composition. By representing the kind of balloon, on which Socrates ascended into the air like a true aerostat,* he hoped to insure the suffrages both of judges and spectators. But this indecent farce was dropped after the first representation; for when exhibited before all the deputies of the allied and tributary towns, assembled at Athens in the spring, they agreed unanimously, that the character of an unknown person, called Socrates, was uninteresting on the theatre.†

Seneca has preserved an authentic letter from Epicurus; in which he acknowledges, that after having lived many years in Greece, even his name was not known there.‡ Those profane men, who were either absorbed in commercial speculations, or carried away by political affairs and

* Plato, in his Apology of Socrates, says, that Aristophanes invented the story of the aerial expeditions of this philosopher; but it appears probable that some report of that nature had circulated among the lower class of people, on which Aristophanes founded his comedy of *The Clouds*. In the third scene Socrates was introduced, suspended in the air; and the word ΑΕΡΟΒΑΤΩ seems to have been employed then for the first time in the Greek language, to denote the action of walking in the air.

† Ælian, *Hist. Divers.* lib. II.

‡ Seneca, Epist. LXXIX, relates these words of Epicurus: *Novissime adjecit, nil sibi et Metrodoro inter bona tanta nocuisse, quod ipsos illa nobilis Græcia non ignotos solum habuisset, sed pæne inauditos.*

noisy pleasures, had little connection with the sages, who, on their side, exposed themselves rarely to vulgar eyes. Thus the philosopher Xenocrates, who long governed the academy, never entered more than once every year within the gates of Athens.* From this cause the fame of great men there was at first slow in its progress; but at length it burst forth, and filled the universe with a lustre, which can never perish on earth; because posterity will always prove more equitable to the learned, than their cotemporaries.

In the first section of this work, some elucidation has been already given of the system of education and manner of life adopted in the rural habitations of Plato, Epicurus, and Theophrastus; but to complete this article, it is necessary that some notice should be taken of the Stoics. The predominant passion of these men was to distinguish themselves from all others, by introducing every where new usages instead of those already received; but when they imagined themselves governed by the dictates of reason, they were frequently deceived by the impulse of self-love and vanity. It appears evidently to have been from ostentation, that they chose to establish their schools in the centre of Athens, under a portico, called *Pœcile*, which was decorated with the paintings of Polygnotus and Mycon. No

* Plutarch *on Exile*.

spot

spot, in all the extent of Greece, could have been more improper than, this for giving lessons of morality and metaphysics, from the continual interruption, occasioned by a crowd of idle people who came to contemplate a painting of the battle of Marathon, which adorned the public gallery. Another class, composed of the lowest pretenders to versification, became still more troublesome than all others, when they repaired thither to recite their wretched compositions to a noisy audience. The stoics, instead of flying from such scenes to the silence and solitude of the gardens, like the other founders of sects, delighted in civil tumults, and were surrounded by troops of the vilest populace, to whom Zeno sometimes distributed money with the hope of persuading them to withdraw. Such means, however, may be supposed to have produced quite a contrary effect.*

Chrysippus, who succeeded Zeno, was endowed with a very singular genius: he understood perfectly all the rules of logic, but did not always put them in practice, when he attempted to reason. He ventured to assert, that the Greek children should be disciplined with stripes, like the slaves of Mysia. Both Plutarch and Quintilian reprobated this advice; for all is lost, said they, when those, whom we wish to enlighten, must first be reduced to slavery. Chry-

* Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Zeno*.

sippus,

sippus, instead of retracting this paradox, contrived to add another still more extraordinary.

Some unusual commotion one day took place among his scholars, and occasioned much speculation, until it was known that he had quitted the portico, with an intention of teaching in the open air.* He expressed his desire of rendering his school ambulatory, and of conducting the young stoics, like a flock, among the high mountains of Northern Attica. Those, who knew the intemperature of the seasons, and the extreme rigor of the climate in Greece, were convinced, that this method was impracticable; and accordingly Chrysippus soon found himself obliged to renounce his project, and return to the portico.

After such an unfortunate attempt, the stoic Musonius dared to maintain seriously, that the pastoral life was best adapted to the study of philosophy;† and this proceeded from his judging by the imaginary descriptions of the poets, without having any knowledge of the evils attendant on that state. Instruction could never be combined with the wandering life of the Egicores of Diacria; because philosophers require fixed habitations, where they can deposit their mathematical instruments, and preserve those elementary books, which must be consulted at every instant. Strabo relates, in proof

* Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Chrysippus.*

† Fragment of Musonius preserved by Stobæus.

of

of this, that the progress of the scholars in the Lycæum was rendered much more tedious by the loss of their library, which, at the death of Theophrastus, was transferred into Asia.

Notwithstanding this eclipse of the Lycæum, and the rivalship of the schools of Marseilles, Rhodes, Pergamos, and Alexandria, those of Athens continued to preserve an ascendancy over all the others. Neither is it any difficult matter to assign the cause of this superiority, which was so notorious that it could not be disputed by any nation of the ancient world.

In no country was the Greek language spoken with so much purity and elegance as at Athens; and this advantage alone was sufficient to attract those who were disposed to apply themselves particularly to the belles lettres. At Marseilles, on the contrary, the language was corrupted with a number of foreign terms, barbarous, as well as Celtic. If the morals of the professors there were irreproachable, those of the inhabitants had sunk into such disrepute, that people were ashamed to say in Greece, that they had either been at Marseilles, or intended to go thither; and the very name of such an academy must have made fathers tremble for the virtue of their children.*

* *Massiliam navigare* was used as a proverb to signify one great depravity; and *Massilienses mores* denoted another still greater. Tacitus pretends that, in his time, the people of Marseilles had been much converted.

At

At Rhodes, the Doric dialect alone was spoken, which had been excluded from the schools, on account of its natural harshness and excessive obscurity. It was therefore, totally unfit for scientific discussions;* and the Rhodians could never succeed in giving their name to a sect of philosophy.

Alexandria and Pergamos had indeed some advantages over Athens, from the astonishing richness of their libraries; but their schools were subject to the despotic controul of kings, and the professors were restrained from speaking freely, particularly on politics, which formed an essential part of the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. These men were therefore under continual dread of losing their places, or displeasing a court; but whatever might have been their circumspection, we know of a sovereign of Egypt, who banished them from his dominions, and reduced the academy of Alexandria to fly, wander, and beg over the face of the globe.

At Athens, the schools were not only free, but independent of the magistracy: they discussed all systems of politics, the nature of each law, and the merits of every government, without being obliged to court any favor. The philosophers never saluted either the archons, the demagogues, or the areopagites; and it

* Porphyry, *Life of Pythagoras.*

often

often happened that the Epicureans neither knew, nor were known to the ruling magistrates. From all this we may conclude, that no government is more favorable to the culture of sciences and arts than a democratic, or popular constitution; for those men, who have lost their own independence, are incapable of ever enlightening either themselves or others.

The liberty enjoyed at Athens was so great, that every person could not only gratify his taste, but even humor his caprices; and during the heat of summer, certain Cynics were seen naked, indulging themselves like gymnosophists by walking under the shade of the olives-trees;* and at night their only shelter was a roof of straw; Aulus Gellius mentions, that in some such miserable place he had met with that famous person, sometimes called Peregrinus, and at others Proteus, who afterwards at Olympus committed himself to the flames, like a widow of Malabar.

In no country was education attended with less expence than at Athens, because the regimen adopted by the philosophers, who lived in common, diminished greatly the disbursements for living; and even at the greateſt feaſts of the Lycæum, each gueſt contributed no more than nine oboli.†

* Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius.*

† Athenæus, lib. XII.

When

When Plato gave suppers, he caused some fruits to be gathered in haste around his rural dwelling; and those who partook of his repasts were not long secured from the cravings of hunger. The philosopher Taurus often dined on a few cucumbers, and yet he was a greater man, and more his own master than the emperor of Persia.

It is probable that those Romans, who studied at Athens, did not conform very rigidly to the regimen of the professors; but they were restrained from displaying any insulting pomp, through fear of being exiled from one garden, and excluded from all the others. Cicero, in writing to Atticus, gives an account of the arrangements he had taken, that his son might appear at Athens, in a manner suitable to his rank; but certainly, says he, there shall be neither horses nor equipage; and this was saying in plain terms, that he must use his feet, like a peripatetic.

From all these observations it appears, that in order to obtain the best education of which man is susceptible, the art should be known of combining four things, very different in their nature. These are liberty, rural life, temperance, and finally, that gaiety of disposition, which Plato contrived to connect even with metaphysics: on the very day he died, a collection of jests were found under his pillow.

END OF THE THIRD SECTION.

FOURTH SECTION.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE MANNERS OF THE ATHENIANS.

I. NOBILITY OF GREECE, AND MORE PARTICULARLY THE DISTINCTIONS OF RANK AMONG THE ATHENIANS.

Athens, as well as Rome, possessed its noble and plebeian families, whose intestine wars were continual, and varied only in their degrees of violence. Such dissensions did not originate there, as some people have supposed, from any inherent vice in the constitution; but were merely the effects of an hereditary rank, which can never subsist in popular states, without occasioning disorders, because it wounds the grand principle of their foundation. Democracy professes the preservation of equality among citizens, and by admitting nobility both at Athens, and Rome, the practice became at variance with the theory of Government.

It may appear wonderful to some of our readers, that legislators did not abolish those odious distinctions, destined alone for the effusion of blood. But an operation of that nature was infinitely beyond their power; for when the Romans

Romans and Athenians destroyed monarchy, to found their republics, nobility had already acquired too great strength to be extirpated; and all endeavours to diminish its influence were confined to measures often ineffectual.

The Athenians had invented genealogies so romantic and ridiculous, that they were only credited by those who could swallow the mythology of the Greeks. For my part, said Alcibiades, I am descended from Jupiter by Eurisace. To this Socrates replied, that he himself was the offspring of Vulcan by Dædalus; and the family of the Dædalidæ was so illustrious, that its name had been given to a people of Attica bordering on Bæotia.* This method of tracing in heaven what was unknown on earth, does not suppose any great effort of the imagination, and only tended to render facts, which should have been evident, totally obscure.

Nobility in Greece, as among the Romans and Germans, originated with a class of men, who were domestic slaves or vassals at the courts of the ancient caciques, or princes of Greece, Italy and Germany. Noblemen, in every country of Europe, continue to perform certain menial offices, which prove, that such were their occupations also in former times. They think it honorable to serve at the tables of princes, whom they continue to approach with bended knees both in Spain and

* Plato, in the first *Alcibiades*.

England.

England. But nothing could be more ridiculous than the conduct of the ancient nobility of France, who at one time were all occupied in determining with what propriety they could enter into the service of a cardinal, and support his train. After consulting the learned in Europe, who then made a profound study of heraldry, it was decided by a majority of suffrages, that, as at Rome the train bearers were all noble, nothing contrary could be admitted at Paris. Those who invented, or conformed themselves to this regulation, were certainly alike worthy of compassion.

That many should seek what is called glory, by paths apparently contrary in their direction, can only astonish those who are ignorant of human nature; for no two passions of the heart are more analogous than the love of money and ambition. While riches could be obtained by serving a cacique, he was sure of finding attendants, even more than were necessary, who employed every sophism to combine the greatest pride with the most humiliating occupations.

It is erroneous to believe, that the custom of creating nobles for the interior service of the palace was confined to nations descended from the Germans; for similar usages existed among the Greeks, under their kings, long before any people of German extraction had ever crossed the Rhine.

Titus Livius describes admirably well the manners and character of those noble Macedonians, who were found at the court of Perseus, when his kingdom was conquered by Paulus Emilius.

Never, says he, did slaves appear more cringing than they in the presence of kings; but in all other places their insolence was beyond measure. Immediately attached to the court, continues he, they wore its livery like other servants, and ate in a particular apartment of the palace. Some among them were indeed very rich, and others, only pretenders to fortune, incurred debts in proportion to their expenditure. From being so long accustomed to such degrading subjection, they could neither endure liberty, nor support the restraint of civil laws, which are the choicest benefits that ever philosophy conferred on the human race.*

Ælian informs us that Philip, father to Alexander, instituted this class of nobility,† whose functions corresponded exactly with the great offices of modern courts; for pantlers, cupbearers, chamberlains, and train-bearers, indicate sufficiently, by their very names, the origin of such honorable employments.

* *Servire Regi humiliter, aliis superbè imperare assueti: prædivites alii: alii quos fortunâ non æquarent, his sumptibus pares. Regius omnibus victus vestitusque: nulli civilis animus, neque legum, nequi libertatis æquè patiens.* DECAD. V. lib. V.

† HISTOR. DIV. lib. XIV.

Among

Among the chevaliers of Macedonia, the advantages of birth were in fact reduced to a personal interest; and aiming at an exclusive possession of riches and honors, they did not hesitate to employ the most ungenerous means. This depravity was the real cause of the ruin of Macedonia, and the facility, with which it submitted to the Romans, can not be considered without astonishment.

From finding in Homer, that the petty princes, who reigned in the islands around Ithaca, were really vassals to Ulysses, some people have been led to conclude, that all the caciques of ancient Greece depended on Agamemnon, who has been styled king of kings on so many different occasions.

Without conforming to this opinion, so apparently exaggerated, we know that in heroic times the sovereign princes of European Greece had particular officers, who conducted their cars, cleaned their arms, and delivered their orders. Homer always gives the title of *Therapontes*, or valets, to Automedon, Patroclus, and Alcimus, who are known, on certain occasions, to have stood in waiting at the repasts of Achilles.*

* Iliad. XXIV. and XVI. The Greeks sometimes employed the term *Endelos* to denote a noble or distinguished person. This resembles greatly the word *Edel*, so frequently used in different dialects of the Teutonick language, the analogy of which with

From similar subjection to the court of the ancient Helenic kings, the nobles of Greece had their origin: while those of Rome were likewise an emanation of royal authority under Romulus, Tullus Hostilius, and the elder Tarquin.*

Through the mythological veil, thrown by pride over the infancy of Athenian nobility, we can discover, that it commenced with the servants of the ancient kings of Attica, according to the general usage established in Greece. On the abolition of that monarchy, the families, who owed their exaltation to the favor of princes, were obliged to diminish their expences, and assume, if not another spirit, at least more simplicity of manners. But no such revolution ever took place in Thessaly, where the nobles, more numerous than in any other part of Greece, continued always to preserve their ancient habits and character.

No people ever experienced so much turbulence and confusion as the Thessalians, who knew no manner of existing but amidst anarchy or oppression. Tyranny augmented there with the decline of legislation, and the arts and

with the Greek is too well known to require any evidence. Yet Aristophanes seems to have been the first writer who made use of this term in that sense; and in speaking of some person in the comedy of the *Knights*, he styles him ΄ΕΝΔΗΛΟΣ ΄ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ.

* Dionysius of Halicarnassus, lib. III. and Titus Livius, Decad. I.

sciences

sciences were so totally neglected that all was darkness.

Magic became every where the favorite topic of conversation; and each person was necessarily supposed to be either enchanted or a sorcerer. No philosopher could enlighten them, neither could any legislator establish order there before the arrival of the Romans, who acknowledged, that the state of this country was more deplorable than that of any other they had hitherto conquered.

Hypatha and Larissa were the two capital towns of Thessalian necromancy; and when ignorance prevailed so totally in great cities, we may suppose the infatuation of the villages. As the mountains and valleys produced different kinds of narcotic plants, these pretenders to magic were in general nothing better than distributers of poison; and whatever was the credulity of the Greeks in general, nothing ever equalled that of the Thessalians. The inhabitants of Arcadia indeed believed in Lycanthropes, and other such phantoms; but none ever imputed to this harmless people either magical practices, or the use of noxious herbs. It is a well known fact that the cultivators in Thessaly were reduced to the most abject slavery under the odious names of *Menestes* and *Penestes*. Thus we find nobility exercising there, in the earliest periods, the same tyranny over the peasantry that has since been practised so universally in Russia, Poland, and Germany

many under the feodal system. Any untitled man who dared to clear a single acre of land, forfeited his freedom; while those, who were attached to the particular service of the caciques, imagined themselves very illustrious persons, and indispensably necessary in this moral world, where the science of heraldry was then supreme, and that of agriculture despicable. The ignorance of the Thessalians did not exceed their vanity; and a peculiar magnificence of dress distinguished them from the other Greeks.* They disdained serving on foot in any army; but as cavalry, they remained at the disposal of every prince capable of gratifying their avarice. Yet, from want of disciplinæ, they could neither be formed into squadrons, nor placed in a regular line of battle, but were reserved for unexpected attacks, skirmishes, pursuits, and depredations.

Insubordination was the leading feature of these men, both in peace and war. Incapable of acting in concert, as an historian asserts, they had no national meeting, nor even those diets so common with the savages of North America and the Poles.†

Such

* Athenæus, lib. XII.

† To form an idea of the total anarchy which prevailed in Thessaly, it is sufficient to read the following passage: *Pergit res in Thessaliam, ubi non modo liberandæ civitatis erant, sed ex omni colluvione et confusione in aliquam tolerabilem formam redigendæ. Nec enim temporum modo vitiis et licentiâ regiâ turbatæ erant;*

Such were the nobles of Thessalia; mortals, according to Isocrates, prone to sedition, blinded by pride, and enemies to every species of civilization. Plutarch defines, in still fewer words, the turbulent disposition of this people: it is impossible to find tranquility in Thessalia, says he, without being buried there.*

Theophrastus the philosopher delineated the character of the noble Athenians, who were commonly called *Eupatrides*, in colours never to be effaced by time. Individuals of that class, are his words, may be known even by the fashion of their hair: they never walk but in murmuring: for them the streets should be more spacious, and the public places less confined, that they might escape suffocation amongst an insupportable populace. Finally, they exclaim, we can no longer remain in a town where obscure plebeians interfere with governing the state; and some means must be adopted to exclude low men from employments, dignities, and honors, which should appertain solely to us, and our children.

That verse where Homer inculcates, that a well governed state cannot admit of more than one king, or master, was constantly in

erant; sed inquieto etiam ingenio gentis, nec comitia, nec conventum, nec consilium ullum per seditionem ac tumultum jam inde a principio ad nostrum usque ætatem traducentes. Tit. Liv. Decad. IV. lib. IV.

* *Pedagog.* and Isocrates in his *Letters to Philip of Macedon.*

their mouths ;* and this favorite maxim of the Athenian nobles demonstrates, that their enmity towards the people equalled that of the patricians at Rome. But it will appear by the following article, that the inveteracy of the two factions was less violent at Athens than among the Romans.

Whatever those romancers of Greece, who were called genealogists, may have pretended, in order to conceal the origin of particular families, or of the Athenians in general; it is however historically ascertained, that they were not descended from the same stock. Even Thucydides, with a candor very remarkable in a Greek historian, acknowledges them to be a mixture of different nations.†

In a country so barren and destitute of all resources as Attica, the original inhabitants were confined entirely to the mountains of Diacri, the only spot where they could nourish themselves with game, or find pasture for their flocks. Thus, it appears, that the shepherds of that canton were the real AUTOCHTHONES, because they first possessed the centre of Attica; and all those who arrived afterwards, can only be considered as simple colonists.

Of the four tribes, scattered over the territory of Attica, only one was called *Autochthon*, and

* Theophrastus, *Char.* ΠΕΡΙ ΟΛΙΓΑΡΧΙΑΣ.

† Lib. I.

this

this certainly allows us to infer, that none of the others had any title to the term.*

Plato supposes, that all the high grounds of Greece were earlier inhabited than the valleys, where every thing was to be feared from inundations, occasioned by the sudden dissolution of snows. Want of industry, and a scarcity of instruments, prevented the inhabitants for many ages from constructing canals to carry off the water as it descended from the mountains. Thus the higher points of the continent must have resembled in those days so many islands, separated by lakes and marshes, totally impassable, unless perhaps during summer.

In following this hypothesis, where priority of possession alone is regarded, it will follow, that the egicores, or goat herds of Diacri, were the most noble of all the Athenians. Even at this day, admission to nobility in every district of Arabia Petræa requires indispensable proof, that the person is descended from the ancient shepherds; and this is likewise the case among the tartars of Chamos, and all other pastoral nations.

The egicores of Diacri alone appear to have drawn their origin from the ancient Pelasgi. All the other inhabitants of Attica were either

* Pollux *Onomast*, lib. VIII. The tribe originally called *Autochthon*, was afterwards named DIACRIS, from inhabiting the heights of Diacri.

Ionians

Ionians from the neighbourhood of mount Parnassus, or adventurers from different parts of European Greece; and in the latter class we may consider the Pæones, who once inhabited Peloponnesus.* But no passage of Athenian history, observes Didorus, discovers the slightest proof, that any colony ever arrived there from Egypt.† In reality the Egyptians had an invincible aversion to the navigation of the Mediterranean; and they dreaded besides the very idea of removing from the tombs of their ancestors, or still more from the banks of the Nile. Neither could a people possessing such repugnance to the sea, and horror against a wandering life, even suppose, in the earlier periods of antiquity, the existence of such a country as Greece. But to terminate this matter, we have the testimony of Plato, who affirms, that not a single drop of Egyptian blood ever circulated in the veins of the Athenians ‡

It is absurd to be always imagining a colony, in order to account for any similarity of religious usages and dogmas in two distant countries. Anciently, as at this day, numbers of vagabond priests and wandering theologians subsisted by transporting their superstitions across the seas.

* Pausanius says, that the Pæones came from the Messenia; and gave their name to one of the 170 cantons of Attica.

† Biblioth. histor. lib. I.

‡ *Funeral Eulogy.*

Some-

Sometimes indeed they became grand pontiffs in the countries converted by them to new errors, perhaps more dangerous than those they had destroyed.

II.—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ATHENIAN AND ROMAN NOBILITY.

Civil discord, or rather, the wars of the noble and plebeian families at Athens, were always less sanguinary than those of the Romans. It is of the utmost importance to know exactly the cause of this difference between two nations holding the first rank in ancient history, or even in the annals of the world.

The nine archons, or principal magistrates of Athens, were debarred from ever commanding the armies of the republic. Thus their charge was only an honorary function, so little calculated to excite the envy of the people, that they never aspired eagerly after this dignity, from which they were excluded by the laws of Solon.

At Rome, on the contrary, the consuls always commanded the armies; and this important prerogative was so alluring in the eyes of the plebeians, that they made incredible efforts to obtain the consulship.

The

The policy of the Athenians was in this point decidedly superior to that of the Romans, who should never have intrusted the command of the army to their consuls. When at once first magistrates in the state, and generals in chief of the forces, they trespassed against the spirit of republican equality, and became too powerful to be restrained.

General Rule: the principal magistrate of a democratic government should never go to war; but, considered as the living image of the law, he ought to reside constantly in the centre of the state. When this is not the case, we may predict infallibly such a confusion of political and military subordination, that he himself shall be incapable of discriminating between his duties as magistrate and as captain.*

At Athens, the commanders of the armies were chosen either from the nobles, or plebeians without distinction, by a plurality of suffrages. Whenever any man had rendered himself famous for a daring disposition, joined to military talents, although clad in rags, he was sure to be elected general. We have an example of this in Cleo, who left his tanners shop to command

* It is a gross mistake to believe that one of the nine archons, called the *Polemarch*, commanded the armies on certain occasions: he was indeed minister of war, but nothing more.

The STRATEGES, who were not magistrates, alone conducted the armies; and the NAVARCHS, who likewise possessed no civil charge, had the sole direction of the fleets.

against

against the Lacedæmonians in the island of Sphacteria. He arrived, attacked, conquered, and brought those who escaped the sword prisoners to Athens. Never did any triumph equal that of Cleo, and on no occasion were the Lacedæmonians so much mortified. They pretended to be the greatest warriors of the universe; and yet had the humiliation of being vanquished by a man, who tanned leather, and traded in shoes.

The nobles at Rome had portraits in wax, either real or imaginary, of all their ancestors from the remotest periods; and these genealogical images were carried in procession at the funerals of the patricians. Nothing could wound more cruelly the eyes of the plebeians than this insulting ceremony; and the fury it occasioned could not be appeased, until the same privilege was extended to all those who attained the priesthood.

This vanity, so absurd, and ill placed in republics, was totally unknown at Athens. By avoiding all such exterior marks of distinction, both jealousy and hatred were restrained, and the effects of discord became less destructive than at Rome. In reading the history of that country we are struck with horror at the torrents of blood shed by Marius, Sylla, and all the commanders of the popular and patrician armies.

The

The Roman senators generally continued in place for life; but those of Athens were elected annually. Thus, it became impossible for the nobility to acquire the smallest preponderance or authority in the senate; for the year expired before any such projects could be conceived and digested.

At Athens, says Lysias, a senator, who remains in place only twelve months, can never be dangerous either to liberty or public tranquility.* This proves evidently that the popular government, or democracy of Athens, was by far more perfect than that of the Romans. Instead of copying exactly the laws and institutions of the Athenians, they changed and corrupted every thing, in order to favor the nobility, at the expence of the legitimate authority of the people. Their senate resembled an impregnable entrenchment, where the patrician faction often reigned despotically: and the smallest penetration is sufficient to perceive the necessity of rendering such assemblies annual, in every democratic state.

The noble families of Rome, rich in cattle, lands, and money, could always command suffrages by corrupting the voters. This was not precisely the case at Athens; for there, in general, they were rather poor, or moderately rich, than exceedingly opulent.

* Lysias *against Evander*.

When

When Alcibiades, who was descended from the most illustrious house in Attica, had attained the pinnacle of his power and glory, the most exaggerated estimate of his fortune and possessions of every kind, did not exceed one hundred talents. This amounted only to about eighteen thousand pounds sterling, and he was far from possessing that sum in reality.*

Conon, who had long commanded the fleets of the republic, and was reckoned very rich, did not leave at his death above the value of forty talents, or little more than seven thousand pounds sterling.† With such a fortune the lowest chevalier at Rome would have thought himself reduced to beggary, in a capital gorged with the spoils of so many conquered kingdoms. The wealth of individuals was squandered there amidst public corruption, in the same manner that rivers, after receiving the waters of so many brooks, are [illegible] themselves lost in the ocean.

To these obvious considerations should be added a particular custom, very extensive in its influence. The Athenians were never distinguished by family names, and without being particularly acquainted with a citizen, it was impossible to ascertain his descent. This circumstance prevented family ambition, so pernicious and even dangerous in republics, from ever at-

* Lyssias, *in an action relative to the effects of Aristophanes.*

† *In the same Pleading.*

tain-

taining any great degree of importance. At Rome, on the contrary, all the patricians were distinguished in such a manner, that when the citizen was known, his progenitors and connections could not be concealed. On hearing the name of Julius Cæsar, it occured to every one that he belonged to the family of *Julia*, ennobled by Tullus Hostilius. Roman nobility, as we have already observed, was entirely an emanation of royal authority, previous to the introduction of a republican government. This branch of despotism and slavery had been afterwards grafted on the stem of liberty; and the only possible fruit, proceeding from that heterogeneous mixture, was civil war.

Family names indeed do not appear to have ever been introduced into any part of Greece; but another institution was peculiar to the inhabitants of Attica. All persons there, however noble or illustrious, were prohibited from inserting the title of citizen of Athens, on any public monument, and particularly in epitaphs. The law ordained that nothing more should be inscribed than the name of the deceased, and his canton, without making the smallest mention of the town of Athens.

The tomb of the greatest historian, that ever appeared in Greece, exhibited only these few words; *Thucydides son of Olorus of the village Ha-*

*lime**

time :* and yet Thucydides was undoubtedly a citizen of Athens. To conceive the spirit of this institution, it is necessary to reflect on what has been already observed concerning the modern origin of the capital, when compared to those cantons, where it was requisite that every person should be either born, or adopted, who aspired at the freedom of Athens. Unfortunately, much obscurity has thus been thrown on the lives of many illustrious men, by rendering the place of their birth doubtful; and it is impossible to decide, whether Socrates was born in Athens, or in the canton of his ancestors at Alopeces.

With respect to that class of men, called Equestrians, who held a kind of intermediate rank between the nobles and plebeians, whatever extraordinary importance they acquired at Rome, either as judges, publicans, or tax-gatherers, yet at Athens they had no direct influenc in the affairs of government. They served chiefly to recruit the common cavalry of the army, and were liable to be fined, or even punished, in cases of flagrant misconduct. Cleo, the demagogue, furnished an example of this, when he accused them of fatiguing the horses of the state by a precipitate retreat before the enemy, which he had the impoliteness to term a shameful

* Marcellinus, *Life of Thucydides.*

flight.* To this circumstance alone we are indebted for the information, that the cavaliers of Athens formed a corps of two thousand men. Perhaps indeed they were less numerous in the days of Solon; and no mention whatever is made of such troops at the battle of Marathon, where the infantry decided the success of the day, by attacking in full speed. This hardy expedient, never before practised, was very natural, in order to prevent a debarkation, where the shores were almost level with the water; and such are still those of Marathon. Whatever marvellous things have been related by historians on this occasion, it is obvious, that the Persians were attacked at the moment of their landing. In that situation it was in the power of ten thousand men to baffle the efforts of a multitude, to increase their confusion, and rout them totally.

Pausanias informs us, that previous to the expeditions of the Persians, the Greeks never maintained many horses for military service; but the numbers they afterwards employed occasioned many new usages, and changed an infinity of others.

From the Equestrian order, and the cavalry in general, the Athenians never reaped advantages proportionate to the trouble and expence of providing for them in a country without

* Scholiast of Aristophanes on the comedy of the *Knights*.

meadows,

meadows, and destitute of all kinds of forage. What has been experienced in so many countries of Europe, took place in Attica, on this occasion: the number of cavaliers continued to augment; but some had no horses, and others no means of keeping them.

III.—LUXURY OF THE ATHENIANS.

On reading a description of the town of Athens, our ideas relative to the luxuries supposed to have existed there must be entirely changed; for, we find that the houses of its inhabitants could be reckoned only cottages, when compared to those of London, or Paris. Yet some modern writers pretend, that the interior of these simple and confined dwellings displayed the most magnificient furniture and decorations. But to destroy such vain and futile conjectures, it is sufficient to quote an assertion of the orator Lysias, who was perfectly acquainted with the state of Athens, and the fortunes of its inhabitants. Very few houses in the capital, says he, are furnished at an expence exceeding a thousand drachmæ, or thirty pounds sterling.* From this estimate we can scarcely suppose common necessaries, much less any traces of profusion.

* In the Pleading *for the effects of Aristophanes.*

Athens, abounding in manufactures, and peopled almost entirely with artists, was in reality the workshop of luxury, but not its habitation. Neither was Rome, as we have already remarked, during many centuries, the scene of ostentation. Pliny informs us, that in his time, the Romans constantly transported the finest statues and most beautiful paintings to decorate their country houses; and he laments that such immortal productions should be exiled from the capital, to shine only in retirement. But the ideas of Pliny on this point are nothing more than illusions; for no just reason can be assigned why those citizens, who had collected, at a great expence, the most precious monuments of the fine arts, should be obliged to place them in some quarter of the capital, rather than in a Latin village. Among such retreats their possessors had most probably received existance, and their hearts experienced still a thousand endearing attachments, either to trees planted by their infant hands, or fountains they had embellished in the bosom of some smiling valley.

The Athenians, in like manner, consumed a great part of their fortune in ornamenting those habitations, called *Eschatia*, which were scattered throughout Attica. But as the functions of Senators, Archons, and Areopagites, required their residence in the capital, they possessed

sessed likewise town houses, as much neglected as those of the country were adorned. Citizens of Athens, exclaimed Pericles, you have banished every generous sentiment, and are occupied alone in erecting different works to increase the ostentation of your gardens.* This species of luxury could not fail to occasion great expences, as may be supposed from the amazing riches at that time circulating in Greece. They proceeded from industry and commerce, added to the silver furnished by the mines of Attica, the copper of Eubæa, and the gold found in Thrace and Macedonia. What Justin, and other historians, equally injudicious, have related concerning immense spoils taken from the Persians, at Marathon, Salamis, and Platææ, is certainly exaggerated: and the greater part of the booty taken on these occasions, was neither dispersed, nor in any way adapted to augment circulation. The throne of Xerxes, the poignard of Mardonius, and the articles of value taken by the Athenians were deposited in the temple of Minerva, as sacred trophies; and could not be employed even in the greatest urgencies of the state.†

* Thucydides. lib. II.

† All the spoils of the Persians preserved at Athens, did not surpass the value of five hundred talents, according to Meursius in his *Cecropia*.

If

If the riches of the Greeks were observed to augment, immediately after the expedition of the Persians into Europe, it was because they could then extend their commerce, and protect their navigation. The Phœnicians and Tyrians had always been supported by the Persian emperors, and as long as the princes of that dynasty retained the dominion of Ionia and Asia Minor, the Greeks could never trade there with advantage. Besides these two nations, they had to rival the inhabitants of Miletus, who were then very powerful on the Mediterranean; and the numerous colonies of that people attest an astonishing commerce.

For a length of time, all the articles of luxury executed at Tyre were in such estimation, that the manufactures of other countries became entirely neglected. But a great revolution took place, when the Greeks perceived the necessity of applying themselves to sciences and arts; for already in the days of Pericles, the Athenian artists began to exhibit models so elegantly formed, and finished with such precision, that they eclipsed in their turn the most celebrated productions of Tyre. Thus the different productions of Asia continued to decline, while those of Greece flourished so eminently, that the scale of commerce was forced to turn in their favor: but this subject is allotted for another article.

These

These investigations are sufficient to convey a tolerable idea of the sources of luxury among the Greeks: but it is impossible to conceive any foundation for that profusion, which has been imputed to the Sybarites. On examining the history of this people, according to the rules of sound criticism, we perceive that they possessed neither gold, silver, nor any other mines; and were destitute of navigation, commerce, and manufactures. The corner of Italy they inhabited was exceedingly small, and yet it has been asserted that the Sybarites maintained an army of three hundred thousand men, without reflecting that such a standing force never existed in all the Roman empire. Some individuals there were said to employ more cooks than the emperor Heliogabalus; and the people in general had the reputation of surpassing the luxuries of Nero, and Commodus, who possessed the wealth of the ancient world, and the spoils of all nations.

Absurdities more extravagant were never imposed on the world; and they demonstrate clearly, that the propensity of the Greeks for the marvellous eclipsed sometimes the judgment of their best writers. I shall not cite Diodorus Siculus, on this occasion, who was ignorant of true criticism; but even Strabo himself speaks seriously of an army of three hundred thousand Sybarites; while the whole force of Athens, at the battle of Marathon, consisted only of nine thousand men.

It is possible, that in a temperate climate and fertile soil, some societies of men should conceive an aversion for labor, and deliver themselves over to that state of repose generally called laziness. But no poor nation could ever exhibit great luxury, which generally brings ruin on the most opulent, and more particularly when directed towards objects of foreign industry. Thus, the Portuguese purchase from the British the lace for their clothes, and feathers for their hats: but they possess rich mines to satisfy the demands of their creditors. On the contrary, no source can be indicated, whence the Sybarites could draw the thousandth part of the money, which would have been necessary even for their clothing. It consisted entirely of foreign stuffs, fabricated, as was said, in Ionia, where the sheep were covered with garments, to preserve the softness and whiteness of their fleeces.*

Every species of luxury tends necessarily either to the gratification of the senses, or to ostentation; two objects which occasion the greatest illusions, and keep mankind eternally fluctuating between hope and repentance. At Athens, the vanity of the women first caused luxury to assume an Asiatic pomp, towards the beginning of the hundredth Olympiad, or three hundred and

* I have demonstrated, in another work, that the greatest part of the absurdities related of the Sybarites, were invented by one Timæus a Sicilian.

eighty

eighty years before our Era. Then began first to appear those sumptuous and magnificent cars, drawn by white mules of rare beauty. These animals, so highly esteemed, were purchased at an enormous expence through all Peloponnesus, and particularly at Sicyon.* The women of Athens vied in producing such equipages at the mysteries of Eleusis, where, under pretext of rendering respectful worship to the gods, they gratified their pride by displaying all the spoils of their husbands and lovers. Luxury in Greece was the offspring of religion; it originated in the temples, and gradually instilled poison into the hearts of the devout. But its favorite abode was at Eleusis, amidst thirty thousand pilgrims assembled from all parts of Europe and Asia. To attract the admiration of such a populace, the Athenian dames presented themselves there, followed by a numerous retinue of slaves; some of these attendants were brought from the centre of Æthiopia, and all of them had names relative to the different offices they had to perform at the toilets of their mistresses.

Lycurgus, the demagogue, having calculated that such excesses must soon bring ruin on the most opulent families, issued a severe law to prevent the women from appearing in this scandalous manner, either on the sacred way, or at

* Demosthenes *against Midias*.

Eleusis

Eleusis.* But the wife of Lycurgus was the first to transgress this decree, on the very day of its publication: and it became so entirely disregarded, that six hundred years afterwards, the Greek bishops were occupied in preaching against those cars drawn by white mules, in which the dames of their diocese went to sermon, as they repaired formerly to their mysteries.† Neither the same men, nor a similar religion existed any longer in Greece; but the ancient vices still remained, as well as the inability of correcting them.

The Greeks adored domestic peace, and always sighed after this coy daughter of heaven, whose dwelling was rarely in the bosom of their families. To procure at least an apparent calm, and momentary repose, they were often obliged, however reluctantly, to gratify the tastes and caprices of their wives by very great sacrifices. They parted with their fortune to save themselves from a storm or a tempest; and yet their situation, says Aristotle, was still preferable to that of the Lacedæmonians. While the men of Sparta had the folly to get themselves killed in war, the women on their side were bent on amassing riches. They became the universal heiresses of the nation, and dictated very severe laws to the small number of citizens, who escaped from sieges and

* *Lives of the ten Orators*; and Taylor's Preface to the *Harangue against Leochares.*

† *Extracts from the works of John Chrysost.* by Montfaucon.

battles

battles. All these circumstances produced more real luxury than that of the Sybarites, and greater disorder than ever was experienced in any other country upon earth.*

The pomp displayed in religious feasts, from the supposition that it rendered them more acceptable to the gods, converted the luxury of the Greeks into an excess of ostentation. This occasioned the ruin of an infinity of families, and particularly of those, who wished to immortalize themselves, in the language of those days, by Olympic palms destined for the chariot-races. The maintenance of so many horses for mere parade required an expenditure, no more in proportion with the fortune of individuals, than a numerous cavalry was suited to the finances of the small states of Greece. They were crushed, one after the other, by the weight of a burden altogether insupportable. The Megareans, who inhabited barren rocks without either grass or grain, contrived to provide for three thousand horses.† This was surely the greatest miracle of industry ever accomplished by man: but it was also of that kind which could not be permanent.

In general, the solemn games of Greece gave rise to many institutions very opposite in their nature to the spirit of republican government. To these solemnities, and particularly to Olym-

* Aristotle's *Politics*; and Plutarch's *Life of Agis*.

† Isocrates ΠΕΡΙ ΕΙΡΗΝΗΣ.

pia,

pia, the greater part of the towns sent deputies, called *Architheores*, who represented the states of Greece, and offered sacrifices, in their name, on the great altar of the Olympian Jupiter. Emulous to inspire strangers with high ideas of the riches and power of their different countries, they began at length to vie with each other in producing vases of gold and silver, executed by the most famous artists. Such precious articles were displayed profusely in superb pavilions along the banks of the Alpheus.*

With this originated the pomp of ambassadors, who must one time or other share the fate of the Architheores, and be abolished as an incumbrance to those by whom they are either sent or received. Instead of preventing misunderstandings, they have the art of fomenting them into such violent storms, that their baneful effects can scarcely be averted, by all the prudence of moderate and well-meaning men.

It was customary in Greece to choose the Architheores among the richest class of citizens, who, without being burthensome to the republic, could gratify insatiable pride and insupportable vanity, which are the chief motives in all ostentatious embassies. These men always as-

* Diodorus Siculus describes the pomp displayed by the ambassadors of the tyrant, Dionysius at the Olympic games. The town of Athens possessed vases of gold and silver, which were lent to the Architheores. Andocides *against Alcibiades*.

sumed

sumed an imposing and mysterious air, and they seized every opportunity of rendering themselves remarkable for magnificent furniture. Their equipages were superb, and their robes of such extraordinary value, that they have sometimes been sold in the fairs of Greece for two talents, or three hundred and sixty pounds sterling.*

The greater part of the Athenians belonged to particular societies, called *Eranes*; and with them originated the idea of all those associations now so generally established in the towns of Europe, under the most fantastical denominations.

It was said of the Eranes, that they contributed both to the patriotism and luxury of the Athenians. Each member had to deposit a certain sum monthly in the common treasury; and this was destined for the relief of associates who laboured under particular misfortunes, such as inability either in the payment of a fine, or the maintenance of credit at a critical moment. But as soon as circumstances would admit of an arrangement, they were obliged to refund the principal sums, without however being liable to either discount or interest.†

These assemblies, often tumultuous, were sometimes subject to serious disorders. Either the directors accused the members of breaking their engagements, and neglecting to pay duly

* Theophrastus, *Char.* ΠΕΡΙ ΑΑΖΟΝΕΙΑΣ.

† Harpocrat. at the word ΕΡΑΝΙΣΤΗΣ.

the

the stipulated quotas at the expiration of each month, or they, in turn, stood charged with enriching themselves at the expence of the society, by certain stratagems called frauds by us, but in Greece they were only termed subtilties. On this account the Athenians, who had already established one tribunal for the theatre, and another for good sayings, added a third to decide on the disputes of the Iranists.*

When compelled at length to act in concert, they celebrated those nocturnal feasts, called *Symposia*. They began with a great supper, and continued until morning amidst goblets flowing with the wines of Thasus and Lesbos. This was in fact a miniature exhibition of the Bacchanalia, with the only difference, that women, who acted such principal parts there, were never admitted to the rites of the Iranes. Courtesans however, and female dancers, had permission to represent sketches of operas for the amusement of the society; and the subject of such pieces generally referred to the loves of Bacchus and Ariadne.†

It was thus that these institutions, originating in patriotism, became at length still more closely connected with national luxury. Since their revival in Europe, they have propagated them-

* The tribunal for deciding on the disputes of the Iranists had a particular code, which was called Iranic nomi.

† Xenophon's *Banquet of Socrates*.

selves

sleves so rapidly, as to fix political attention; and opinions, with regard to them, are at this day greatly divided.

Those, who condemn such establishments as incompatible with maxims of good policy, appeal to the authority of the emperor Trajan, who was their declared enemy, and endeavoured to extirpate all the Eranes of Greece.* That prince was the more inveterate againſt those societies, because he suspected them of occasioning dangerous conspiracies, and of favoring the progress of a new religion, which threatened the Roman empire with dreadful revolutions.

To this it is replied, that the apprehensions of Trajan were not those of the republic of Athens, nor of the Greeks in general, who had ever considered the Eranes as very useful among a commercial people, where disappointments and ship-wrecks frequently produced such distresses, as could only be relieved by associations of that nature.

It is really surprising, that political sentiments should differ so entirely on questions subject to positive rules, and admitting of no arbitrary interpretation. All assemblies united by oaths, and held under the veil of night, should be dis-

* *Letters from the emperor Trajan to the younger Pliny.* It was in consequence of the law of this prince againſt the *Eranes*, and the *Heteries*, that the Christians were called upon to render account of their nocturnal assemblies; and this they called a perſecution.

countenanced

countenanced by every government. But when the ceremony of swearing is omitted, all meetings ought to be tolerated, although not of a nature to be either prudently introduced or encouraged. Institutions of this kind never answered the favorable expectation of the Greeks, who invented them. The many difficulties, experienced by the magistrates in calming the disputes of these communities, prove, that they possessed neither union nor harmony; and the money collected there was either squandered in feasts, or embezzled by directors, instead of being employed to aid the unfortunate. More dependence should be placed on individual than social virtue; for when a citizen is vicious, the state suffers; but the detriment is infinitely greater, when the contagion infects a society of Eranists.

Ancient authors had already remarked, that luxury constantly augmented with the progress of commerce, and was drawn, as if by attraction, into every country where riches abounded. From Lydia it passed into Ionia, and thence throughout European Greece, where all the modulations, of which it was susceptible, were reduced to practise. The Romans indeed might have enlarged the scale of expence by their superior opulence, but could never augment the elements already discovered; and from poverty of invention they were compelled to adopt such terms, as had primitively been introduced by the Greeks.

An

An example of this may be taken from those machines, called Automatons: they were customary at great feasts of ostentation, and appeared during the removal of the first course. The wainscot, opening with a shock, admitted artificial clouds, which descended in showers of perfumes; while moving statues distributed garlands of flowers, after an idea suggested in the poems of Homer. This was imitated by the Romans in a famous entertainment, described by Sallust, where Victory entered, amidst the noise of thunder, to crown Metellus with laurels.*

Cicero pretended that the Latin language was richer than that of Greece: but it had no term expressive of the action of such machines; and, even in the time of Petronius, the Greek name Automaton remained in use throughout Italy.†

The Athenians delighted in mechanical prodigies, and introduced them not only on the theatre, but even at their religious feasts. At the Panathenæa particularly, a ship steered, with full sails, through the different quarters of Athens, as if it ploughed the bosom of the Mediterranean. This was the most enormous automaton that ever was constructed in Greece; and Philostratus, who is never very judicious, has certainly been deceived, when he pretends that it moved by the impulsion of a thousand oars. Neither

* Fragment of the second Book of the *Roman History*.

† SATYR. in the *Feast of Trimalchion*.

had subterraneous machines any influence, as Meursius imagined, who was the greatest of compilers, and the worst of critics.* It advanced by means of different hidden wheels, which were actuated by agents equally concealed from view. Vessels constructed of fir, or larch wood, like those of the Greeks, could easily be dragged on shore, and even transported across the isthmus of Corinth, from one sea to the other, as we learn from several ancient authors, and particularly from Titus Livius. Yet the breadth of that neck of land, according to the chart of Greece, by d'Anville, was about seven miles.

The galley in the Panathenæa was a spectacle not only calculated to astonish the multitude, but to excite the admiration of connoiseurs themselves. The principal sail consisted of superb embroidery, executed by the most expert of the Athenian virgins, after the designs of the best masters. The subject was a representation of the combat waged by the Giants against

* The description given by Philostratus of the galley in the Panathenæa, is not only confused, but even contradictory. After mentioning in his *Lives of the Sophists*, that this vessel was conducted by oars, he adds, that it moved entirely by means of concealed springs and an interior mechanism. ΔΡΑΜΕΙΝ ΔΕ ΤΗΝ ΝΑΥΝ, ΟΥΧ ΥΠΟΖΥΓΙΩΝ ΑΓΟΝΤΩΝ, ΑΛΛ' ΥΠΟ ΓΕΙΟΙΣ ΜΗΧΑΝΑΙΣ ΥΠΟΛΙΣΘΑΙΝΟΥΣΑΝ. These are the expressions which deceived Meursius; and yet they evidently mean nothing more than that wheels were placed in the hold. This ship was not properly an automaton, but a body moved invisibly.

Heaven

Heaven, where Minerva appeared foremost in the defence of Olympus, and dealt about blows among the Titans more dreadful than even the thunder of Jupiter. This magnificent production, which Virgil, or rather Catullus, has described in Leonine verse, contained many beautiful objects in detail, and was bordered with garlands of olive leaves, entwined with violets. Sometimes the angles of the embroidery were destined for the portraits of heroes or great men; and this was the highest degree of glory ever attained by any Athenian.*

We are enabled, by these facts, to form accurate ideas of the luxury exhibited at the religious feasts of Attica. Yet, as such ornaments tended more to display the genius and address of the artists than the essential richness of the matter, it was right to encourage them, in order to excite every heart to virtue and patriotism by the most flattering of all recompences.

The same observation should be extended likewise to the Fine Arts in general, and particularly to sculpture and painting. In a country where white marble was found in such profusion that it scarcely bore any price, the chisel, which transformed that substance into an elegant vase, communicated to it a real value; and the nation, far from being impoverished, by such pursuits, acquired another branch of industry. A block of marble, in its

* Meursius PANATHENÆA.

natural state from the quarries of mount Pentelichus, might be purchased for two drachmæ by foreign merchants; but after passing through the workshop of Praxiteles, it could with difficulty be procured for six thousand.

It is by tracing evident principles of this nature, that we can now justify the taste of the Athenians for their sumptuous deserts, so much blamed by Plato. While nothing was employed but the honey of mount Hymettus, and the choicest fruits of the country, the mass of national wealth did not suffer by entertainments, and the cultivators received additional advantages. But when, as Xenophon says, it became customary to adorn the feasts of Attica with all the costly productions of Sicily and Asia Minor,* then the luxury of repasts changed its nature and was fatal to the state. This mode not only occasioned the exportation of money, but affixed a certain value to superfluities, which they ought not to have attained, especially in a country already condemned, from barrenness of soil, and intemperature of climate, to depend on strangers for both clothing and nourishment. The Athenians had no fields proper for cultivating flax, although the excessive heat in summer rendered this article universally necessary.† They were therefore probably supplied at first with

* Treatise *on the Republic of Athens.*

† Thucydides, lib. I.

linnen

linens manufactured in Peloponnesus, where flax was produced in such abundance, that the republic of Lacedæmon distributed the seed to nourish the Helots, who served in the armies of the state.* But when the Athenians had extended their commerce to Egypt and Thrace, they found means of procuring those articles both superior in quality, and cheaper than at the fairs of Peloponnesus.

However the ancient Thracians and Germans might have been plunged in barbarity, yet both the culture of flax and the act of spinning had attained a degree of perfection, which supposes more industry than has been generally allowed to those nations. On a former occasion, I have remarked likewise, that the Lombards, Burgundians, and other swarms which issued from Germany to invade the continent and isles of Europe, were all clothed with linen at the time of their emigration.

Miletus, and Ionia in general, produced anciently the most precious wool; but that of European Greece was exceedingly coarse, little esteemed, and almost unfit for any kind of manufacture. The flocks of Attica, however, from being nourished on aromatic plants, under a serene sky, afforded fleeces infinitely superior to

* Thucydides, lib. IV. Flax seed, in whatever manner it might have been prepared at Lacedæmon, must have been very difficult of digestion, and exceedingly unwholesome.

those of Arcadia and Phocis.* In embroidery and the preparation of woollen stuffs, consisted the chief occupations of the Athenian women. They excelled so far in various branches of this art that when luxury had deprived them of the very shadow of a fortune, they could have recourse to their ordinary talents against the horrors of famine. At this day, says Demosthenes, many persons are seen in the different manufactures reduced to gain their bread by spinning, who were once among the illustrious dames of Attica†. Such was their situation, after having amused themselves, like many others, with amorous adventures at nocturnal feasts, and they too had probably paraded in their gilt cars at the mysteries of Eleusis.

An Athenian of distinction complained to Socrates, that he was unable to support the expences of his house, since several women of quality had taken refuge there from the persecution of complicated misery. Nothing, replied the philosopher, is easier than to vanquish such momentary difficulties. Provide a quantity of wool, added he, and let your dames, so noble, and so idle, be employed in preparing it; then not only your affluence will return, but likewise that chearfulness which has abandoned you since the commencement of your distresses.‡

* Athenæus, lib. II.

† *Against Eubulides.*

‡ *Facta et dicta Socrat.* lib II.

The

The expedient invented by Socrates became a maxim so familiar to the Greeks, that Alexander proposed to make the family of Darius gain their bread by spinning, after he had robbed them of all the riches of Persia and Media.

Revolutions occasioned by luxury continued to overturn some Athenian families, and exalt others as suddenly, without disquieting greatly the politicians. It is right, said they, that each person should in turn be rich and poor; but they were really alarmed by the diminution of specie, proceeding from an increased consumption of foreign grain, and still more by the total ruin of their commerce in Thrace. This misfortune arose from the prosperity of Amphipolis; and the extraordinary mercantile importance, attained by that famous colony under the protection of Philip of Macedon, shall be noticed more fully hereafter. At that period the Athenians were no longer capable of restraining their pleasures, or moderating their desires. Indifference and profusion augmented with the tide of misfortunes; and frequently, while losing some considerable town, on the banks of the Strymon, they amused themselves with making rash bets on the combats of cocks and quails. Such was the infatuation of the Greeks, with regard to all games of hazard, that they could not be disgusted by the most constant run of ill-fortune,

tune.* As the police of Athens affected great severity, the societies of gamblers, to prevent interruption, contrived to obtain two asylums beyond the jurisdiction of the capital; the one at Phaleris, and the other, still more notorious, at Sciron. Some country magistrates, called Demarchs, had most probably been prevailed upon to sell their protection, and screen such practices from the areopagites, who exercised a continual scrutiny on morals. But, like the censors at Rome, they were feeble barriers against the combined assaults of luxury and libertinism.

Great analogy seems to have existed in every age between games of hazard and commerce. When openly persecuted in one place, they fled to establish themselves in another, and flourished either among marshes or deserts. The republic of Athens, to concentre its military and mercantile fleets entirely at Piræus, abandoned the harbour of Phaleris. That place therefore must have soon fallen into obscurity, had it not received a dangerous celebrity from gamblers, and profligate women, who repaired thither, as well as to Sciron, from all parts of Greece.†

* The Greeks had invented a prodigious number of games of chance, of which a long list may be seen in the *Palamedes* of Mr. Souter, and in the Treatise of Mr. de Pauro on the *Alea veterum* as well as in the *Græcia ludibunda*.

† The portico of the temple of Minerva at Phaleris was the principal place for games of chance.

The

The great increase of prostitution in Attica attracted the attention of the republic, and after much debate, the project of a famous financier was adopted. By this decree the courtesans were not only to be tolerated, but even protected, on paying a poll-tax called *Pornicon Telos*.*

While the senate and areopagus applauded themselves with the idea of having augmented considerably the revenues of the republic, it was represented by a philosopher, that nothing could be more degrading than to receive an impost of this nature, invented by publicans ignorant of the elements of political arithmetic. Whatever you impose on these women, said he, is really laying the Athenians under additional contributions; for, paid with your own coin, you will only imagine yourselves rich during the day, to become much poorer at night. Finally, added he, it is ridiculous to impose taxes on merchants of any kind; for by raising in proportion the price of their wares, the whole burthen falls upon the purchasers.†

Such

* Æschines *against Timarchus*. Some critics pretend that Solon himself established this tax; but the passage of Athenæus, on which they found their opinion, does not prove it by any means.

† This alluded to the tariffs placed by the courtesans at the entrance of their apartments, in order to tax themselves. We may judge of them in general by the following inscription: QUICUNQUE TARSIAM DEFLORAVERIT, MEDIAM LIBRAM DABIT

Such arguments amounted almost to demonstration; but the financiers of Athens would never renounce their project; and this decree remained valid in the days of Demosthenes, to whom the famous pleading against the courtesan Næera has been attributed. This harangue however was evidently the production of some more ancient orator; and although pruned by delicate critics of many passages, capable of alarming the least scrupulous modesty, yet what remains is sufficient to convince every person, that the morals of the Greeks were even then exceedingly corrupt.

Some modern authors, as ignorant as possible of such matters, have imputed this depravity to the influence of the Epicurean system; but the defence of Epicurus on this point may be reduced to a narrow compass: he was then unborn. Near two hundred years before the elements of that philosophy were published, the Greeks repeated the verses of Anacreon, who was a greater epicure than any professed disciple of the sect. Yet the priests, who declaimed so much against the philosophers, never thought of attacking the memory of Anacreon. His ashes are left to enjoy eternal repose in the Elysian fields, under the very myrtle where he was wont to sleep in the arms of Bathyllus.

DABIT. POSTEA POPULO PATEBIT AD SINGULOS SOLIDOS. Symphosion, in the *History of Apollonius*. Both the half-pound and the penny were of gold in this calculation.

This

This panegyrist of voluptuousness, even of the most illicit nature, neither encountered persecution during life, nor censure after death, because he was artful enough to pass for a poet, and not a philosopher. In this capacity he did not appear very dangerous to the Greek theologians, who were in fact the greatest corrupters in that country. For their dogmas must necessarily have perverted the minds of those fanatics, who were taught by them to adore deities blemished with every species of debauch, and worship goddesses greatly inferior to the courtesans who paid the poll-tax at Athens.

Such was in every age the true character of the Hierophantes, or religious impostors of that country: whenever any chimera, no matter how shameful and humiliating to reason, was adopted, they would never allow themselves to be undeceived, but imagined a thousand wretched shifts, rather than abandon the most palpable error. Yet some men at this day have still ventured to apologize for the priests of ancient Greece, under pretext, that they were not the inventors of the most scandalous and corrupt mythology that ever appeared since the origin of societies and religions.

How or by whom such absurdities were introduced, affords little justification for men, who inculcated them among the people, and never made any open attempt to contradict the most

most immoral fables. Thus the gods were not only represented as tolerating vice, but made to act as accomplices in theft, murder, adultery, and incest, with other abominable practices, concerning which decency obliges us to be silent.*

The pontiffs and sacrificers of profane deities, by encouraging every species of religious luxury, at the expence of fanaticism, had no small share in the progress of social profusion. Pericles contributed likewise to the same evil, by displaying a pomp truly Asiatic, in the great temple of Minerva; and from this event many authors have dated the origin of an obvious change in the manners of the Athenians. They then began to set great value on numberless articles, which either did not exist, or had no place in the Greek vocabulary at the time of Solon. Anciently, said a comic poet, no peacocks were seen among the mountains or valleys of Attica, and now they are even more numerous than quails. But the Athenians did not confine themselves to one simple species; for they possessed great variety of foreign birds, and besides were no less admirers of strange animals. They imported a profusion of African parrots, Sicilian pigeons and pheasants, Maltese and Lacedæmonian dogs, Thessalian and Argolese

* See the Article on the *religion of the Athenians, and the Greeks in general.*

horses,

horses, Peloponnesian mules, and monkies of various kinds.*

The women, on their part, were equally extravagant in every thing that belonged to dress; and instead of augmenting their charms, they contrived to eclipse them entirely. You never suppose, said a philosopher, that the great lustre of rubies and emeralds, worn about the neck, destroys even the vivacity of your eyes. So much expence is required to make you less lovely, while mount Hymettus and the thickets of Diacri abound in flowers, which formed into graceful garlands and crowns by the hands of the shepherds, occasion little trouble, and are presented with pleasure.

He, who threw away his time and precepts in this manner, was acquainted only with the exterior of vices. The vanity and depravity of such people would never allow them to regain the simplicity of nature; and when reduced by excess of luxury to encounter the horrors of indigence, they wanted resolution to support the load of poverty. Theognis could suggest nothing better on these occasions, than to throw themselves from the promontory of Leucas; and that frightful precipice, in all probability, relieved more people from the pangs of famine than the torments of love. The

* They had besides numbers of birds trained up for fighting, in all the houses where games of chance were practised; as is seen in Æschines *against Timarchus*.

Athenians

Athenians alone, from their propensity to philosophy and rural life, were enabled at times to resist all the frowns of fortune with heroic firmness. When adversity was on the point of completing their ruin, they fled to a garden, lived on herbs, and became sectators of some famous moralists; or adopting, all at once, the regimen of the Cynics, they ended with despising the whole world.

Those, who did not inherit this force and elevation of mind, became flatterers at some court, either in Sicily, Egypt, or Asia. There they promised immortality to kings, offered incense to their imbecility, encouraged their vices, and exercised, in all its branches, the lowest of all trades, that of a courtier. When they had put the folly of princes under contribution, they returned into Greece, quite loaded with spoils, and spent at least the latter moments of their lives like honest men. The art of flattery, which may be considered as the secret spur of luxury, was never practised in a more refined degree than among the Greeks. Kings could not exist without these adulators, who were well prepared, on all occasions, with hyperboles, embellished by harmonious words, and agreeable expressions, beyond what those ignorant of their language can imagine.

Athens was the focus whence all rays of glory diverged, and its inhabitants were the distributors of fame; but their avarice in this respect, where

where they had any dislike, was only equalled by their prodigality to favorites. Alexander, when wounded at the attack of some place in the East Indies, could not conceal the object of his ambition; O Athenians, he exclaimed, how much it costs me to obtain your praises! Kings, at this day, procure incense much cheaper in the gazettes; but they may be assured, that posterity will give no more credit to such panegyrics, than to the elogy which Paterculus composed for Tiberius.

Excessive luxury in funerals, beyond what can now be imagined, directed the genius of the Greeks to adulation in very distant times; and this may justly be considered as the most ancient of their vices. No sooner did any one expire, whether cacique, or citizen somewhat rich, than his children, or heirs had the vanity to publish rewards for those, who, at a public trial of skill, would rehearse the best elogium of the deceased; and he who exaggerated most was sure of obtaining the greatest number of suffrages.

Poets, who had acquired the most celebrity, did not refuse to undertake long voyages in quest of such triumphs; and even Hesiod, it is certain, assisted at the obsequies of Amphidamas, an ancient cacique of Eubæa. The panegyric he delivered there on a person almost unknown, was composed in such pompous verses, and contained

contained so many extravagant compliments, that all his antagonists were reduced to silence. He obtained the prize destined for flattery; and of this he dared to boast as the most honorable action of his life.* These poems, when really well composed, were committed to memory; and after being sung during three or four generations, they acquired the weight of tradition. It was in this manner, that so many historical fables, concerning the imaginary exploits of princes and heroes, have been scattered throughout the world, and principally in Greece.

The Iliad, in its original state, appears to have been composed for funeral games, celebrated in honor of Achilles, by some princes of Thessaly, who pretended to be descendants from the family of Peleus, and of the race of the Centaurs.

These were not always transient feasts, but often anniversary institutions. Thus the Iliad, or rather the Achillead, might have been composed at different periods; and probably, from the number of fragments, since added, it would be impossible for Homer himself, were he now on earth, to trace his own work. Some schools of grammarians at Athens made use of an edition of the Iliad now lost; but its former existence is attested by Æschines in his pleading against Timarchus.

In all funeral games, the poets, who contended for the prize, brought the gods and goddeses to

* Ἔρτα, κ. Ἡ,

their

their assistance; composed long romances; and introduced frequent episodes, whenever they wanted matter. Pindar confesses this, and compares himself to a traveller, who, instead of passing through some town in a straight line, wanders from one oblique street to another, until he loses himself entirely. *Such digressions must necessarily have taken place, whenever poems were composed to the memory of cruel and slothful princes, whose lives afforded nothing but crimes, unfit for panegyrics; and yet it was necessary to say something, in order to obtain money from the heirs of an obscure person.

No sooner was the race of wandering poets extinct in Greece, than the prose writers became the ordinary adulators of the nation, and their hyperboles, although destitute of the graces of poesy, equalled those of the poets themselves, as appears by the funeral orations pronounced at Athens in the Ceramicus.

All celebrated pretenders to this art were enticed into Asia for the obsequies of Mausolus. The prizes offered by Artemisia were so considerable, that every resource of genius and adulation was exhausted to throw some sparks of glory on the tomb of a prince, who, no better than a robber and a publican, had lavished away the blood and fortune of his subjects.†

* Pythia, Ode XI.

† Aristotle, *Economica*, lib. I.

The annals of Rome, says Cicero, were likewise shamefully altered by the impudence of those, who composed funeral elogies for the patrician families. Dead men were raised to the consulship, who could not, during life attain that dignity, and generals were made to triumph who never had either gained or lost a battle.*

Historical veracity became thus corrupted firstin Greece, called the ocean of fables, and afterwards in Italy, where truth was equally a stranger. The Romans even dared to crown the impostures of the panegyrists by the ceremony of the apotheosis. This cost some money there, and procures more in the present day for those who know how to copy them.

The laws composed by Solon for diminishing the expence of funerals, and the evident folly of throwing so much riches into a tomb, terminated at length this species of luxury. But that of the theatre prevailed in its stead; and the Athenians continued to raise themselves by representing tragedies, as they had done before with their funeral orations.

In the time of Eschylus the tragic choirs were still composed of fifty persons, not less magnifi-

* Here is the manner in which he defines these pretended annals of Rome: *Multa enim scripta sunt in eis, quæ facta non sunt: falsi triumphi, plures consulatus, genera etiam falsa.* Cicer. in Brut. Such were the consequences of the funeral eulogies.

cently

cently clothed than the actors themselves, who appeared in robes of purple covered with gold and precious stones. The theatre of Athens, illuminated only by the rays of the sun, required infinitely richer decorations than, when the eyes of spectators are dazzled amidst artificial lights, where one illusion contributes to another.

Whatever may have been advanced concerning the reform of the tragic choirs, it appears to me that the enormity alone of the expence occasioned their being reduced from fifty to fifteen persons.

By this change the directors of the theatre could dispense with many dresses and a great number of musicians; but scarcely had they got rid of this embarrassment before the comedians introduced another equally ruinous. When they were to represent Priam, Agamemnon, or any other king of the heroic ages, they insisted upon having a train of slaves suitable to their dignity, and would never approach the stage without a number of valets, gentlemen, and pages. Plutarch speaks of one actor, who had the insolence to refuse playing the part of a queen, because unprovided with attendants to appear decently in public.*

* In the *Life of Phocion*.

At Athens the characters of the women were always played by men; and so well acted, says Juvenal, that it was difficult to suppose the deception. The Greeks, continues he, are born comedians: they can imitate all tones, copy all gestures, counterfeit all attitudes, and represent all personages.

The comic choirs, composed of twenty five persons, were not diminished like the others, but entirely abolished; because the sums necessary for their continuance could be no longer afforded, as we learn from the scholiast of Aristophanes. This reform was exceedingly fortunate; for all those idle accompaniments occasioned much confusion, and rendered the piece so unnatural, that comedy could not advance towards perfection. The comic choirs were employed alone in singing very scandalous couplets; and the poets charged them with all apostrophes against roguish financiers, timid generals, and profligate women. When it became prohibited at Athens, by a positive law, to name any citizen on the theatre, this kind of satyrical music was no longer interesting, and it vanished without regret.

In the cantons of Attica, where comedy was invented, the institution of choirs appears very natural, because the spectators themselves took part in the action of the piece. An imitation at this day of the *Trygedy* of mount Icarus, in all its details, would require that the pit should dance and sing between the acts, which must add greatly to public gaiety. But this could only take place in open air, and therefore Trygedy became consecrated to the vintage, as Comedy in its origin was peculiar to the rural repasts of Attica.

Aristotle

Aristotle indeed was inclined to deny this fact; but it seems founded upon too many probabilities to be doubted.*

Whatever might have been the profusion of the Athenian theatre, it is certainly exaggerating greatly to pretend, that a representation of the Tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides was more expensive, to the republic, than the war of Peloponnesus. The losses sustained in such campaigns are difficult to be calculated; but every person can conceive, that the celebrity of the poets and actors of Athens must have drawn together such multitudes of strangers, that the mass of money was augmented rather than diminished by the celebration of the Bacchanalia. As the Olympic games concealed a certain political view in favor of commerce, we have reason to think, that the theatrical representations of the Athenians were calculated to attract the money of strangers. In the sequel of this work the Greeks will appear such cunning financiers, that, compared to them, our mode rncalculators scarcely deserve the name of apprentices.

* Poetic.

Notwithstanding the pretensions of the Dorians, which Aristotle has endeavoured to maintain against the Athenians, it is certain that comedy has derived its name from the word *Comos*, signifying festivals, accompanied with the dance. Such was the etymology of the *Tricomes* and *Tetracomes* of Attica, of which Aristotle had not the least knowledge.

The article on luxury terminates here to be succeeded immediately by another on commerce; that two things, so closely connected, may follow each other in their natural order.

END OF THE FOURTH SECTION.

FIFTH SECTION.

COMMERCE AND FINANCES OF THE ATHENIANS.

Great Britain is now generally allowed to excel in manufactures, and the Dutch are considered as the greatest dealers in Europe; but the Athenians anciently united both qualities; and the exports of their celebrated productions would have been incomparably more lucrative than those of the Tyrians or Carthaginians, had they not been constrained to expend enormous sums in purchasing grain at foreign markets.

The necessity of providing constantly for the town of Athens, was an object of such importance, that it fixed the attention both of legislators and politicians. Different magistrates were created for the inspection of supplies; but their vigilance could not prevent monopolies, and numberless destructive frauds arising from the thirst of gain.

All the cunning inventions, attributed to the speculators of London, were known to the Greeks; and so much did they excel in both good and evil, that posterity could scarcely add any thing new either to their virtues or vices.

The merchants, who frequented the exchange

of Piræus, had the art of spreading various alarming reports, in order to augment the price of wheat. Sometimes their advices stated with certainty, that foreign powers had laid an embargo on shipping, and every thing announced approaching war: at others, it was asserted, that the vessels, destined for the supply of Athens, were taken by the Lacedæmonians, or had been totally wrecked in the Euxine sea.*

Although void of foundation, such rumors had no inconsiderable effect upon commerce. The price raised in this manner was never reduced, until some cargoes chanced to arrive from Sicily, which could be disposed of at a cheaper rate, because the voyage thence was less tedious.†

The Taurica Chersonesus, now called Crimea, afforded the greatest quantity of grain for the Athenian market; and the republic endeavoured to preserve a good intelligence there, in order to trade with greater advantage. As the harbours of that country were inconvenient and neglected, king Leucon was prevailed upon to facilitate the exports of this peninsula, which, particularly to the southward, must then have been highly cultivated.

* Lysias, in his pleading against the *corn-merchants*, or the *Sitopoles*.

† Demosthenes, *against Dionysiodorus*.

The place chosen for a new port was called in the Tauric language *Ardauda*, or the seven Gods, and was afterwards named Theudosia by the Greeks. The position of this town does not correspond to that of Caffa, as the Russians have imagined, and the law published by them to this effect is contrary to every notion of ancient geography.*

Theudosia, in the time of Demosthenes, continued to be the great mart of the Athenians in the Crimea; and the quantity of grain they exported thence, in very few years, is almost incredible.†

As the Black sea is very stormy, and the Propontis covered with shoals, the cargoes which perished in this long and dangerous voyage were considerable. Besides, in time of war, it was necessary to escort the harvests of the peninsula into Greece, with private armed vessels; and this occasioning a double expence, exhausted at once the fortunes of individuals and the public treasury.‡

* It is an error to believe that this place, destroyed in the reign of Adrian, was ever called *Theodosia*; for the real name was *Theudosia*. Caffa is a new town situated in a very different spot. Vossius on the *Periplus of the Euxine sea*, by an anonymous author.

† Demosthenes *against Leptinus*; and Strabo, Geograph. lib. VII.

‡ Demosthenes.

In

In the operations of this commerce, we perceive the first notions of bills of exchange; and Isocrates mentions particularly, that a stranger, who had brought some grain to Athens, delivered a draft of this nature to one *Stratocles*, for money due to him in some place of the Euxine sea.* He, who procured this bill, found it very advantageous, because his fortune was no longer exposed on a sea covered with corsairs and pirates, where the Lacedæmonians endeavoured to seize all the vessels that came out of Attica.

It appears therefore, that the dangers of the sea in the first place, and afterwards the dread of pirates, or declared enemies, induced the merchants of those days to adopt such practices. But, as the credit of the Greeks was in little repute, this Stratocles, of whom we have been speaking, took very good precautions: he insisted on having a banker of Athens responsible, in case the bill should be protested in the Crimea, because the drawer had no fixed habitation.

The ancients not only possessed more inventions than we suppose, but likewise many others, with which we are totally unacquainted. On examining attentively the nature of the factitious money of Carthage, it bears great analogy to our bank notes. When exhausted by the excessive pay of auxiliary troops, a mode of an-

* Isocrates, in his pleading called ΤΡΑΠΕΖΙΤΙΚΟΣ,

swering

swering immediate demands was adopted there, not less difficult to be counterfeited, than the paper circulating in London. The author of a dialogue, entitled *Eryxias*, who is supposed to have been either Plato, or Æschines the philosopher, informs us that the Carthaginians sealed up some unknown matter in small bags, which, guaranteed by the state, passed current among the merchants for a stipulated value, and answered exactly the same purposes as paper money.*

The Athenians introduced a number of prohibitory laws respecting commerce. Citizens were prevented from placing money in any vessel, which at the end of the voyage did not discharge at Athens; and no grain could be embarked for any other harbour. This law might have been useful in Greece, but any thing similar would ruin the trade of the Dutch on the coast of France, where they employ upwards of three hundred vessels in transporting every kind of grain without restriction.

Such primary productions, as were necessary for the Athenians, could not be exported from any place in Attica. Among these we may reckon timber in general, the rosin collected on mount Parnes, and above all the wax of mount Hymettus, employed in the marine for daubing

* Collection of Dialogues attributed to Æschines the philosopher.

vessels,

vessels, an operation absolutely unknown in our days.*

The republic profited with astonishing address from the destruction of Tyre, and of Corinth. Then, the commerce of the Mediterranean was entirely changed, and the wrecks of those once flourishing towns were collected by the Athenians, who afforded an asylum to unfortunate men, destitute of country and home.

These fugitives, transported to Delos, rendered that island exceedingly opulent, because they preserved their commercial genius, when their former possessions were no more.

By an inscription, found in the last century, it is attested that the Tyrians, after the destruction of their town by Alexander, erected a company of merchants and navigators at Delos,† where the Athenians instituted religious feasts and public games, similar to those of Olympia. From an opinion, that this island was under the immediate protection of Apollo and Diana, its peace remained undisturbed. Thus religion served

* It appears from the Periplus of the Euxine sea by Arrian, that, when a vessel was entirely dashed to pieces, the wax could still be taken from the pieces of the wreck; which proves that it was not incorporated with any resinous substance, as some have erroneously imagined.

† This company was called Η ΣΥΝΟΔΟΣ ΤΩΝ ΤΥΡΙΩΝ ΕΜΠΟΡΩΝ, ΚΑΙ ΤΩΝ ΝΑΥΚΛΗΡΩΝ, *Wehler, voyage de la Grèce.* It discovers how much the Athenians protected this establishment of the Tyrians.

to

to protect the property of the merchants against the attempts of pirates, who, regardless of human laws, were fearful of offending such deities.

Wheresoever, says Strabo, it is practicable to collect a multitude of Greeks, either by superstitious rights, or amusements, commerce fails not to be there; and certainly Strabo never advanced any truth more notorious. The mode generally practised for establishing trade in Greece was simply to promulgate reports of great miracles performed in some obscure place, until it became famous for pilgrimages, and soon afterwards for fairs. In order to attract the people, horse and chariot races were established; prizes awaited the victorious Athletæ; and musicians, poets, and painters contended for crowns, which were sometimes conferred even on the courtesans of Corinth.

This policy was illusory to all ancient nations, except the Romans, who, possessing naturally great penetration, saw nothing more than commerce in all the religious institutions of the Greeks. The Latin authors were so little deceived in this matter, that they openly termed the Olympian games, *the commerce of Olympia*; and one of them went so far as to maintain, that this species of traffic at Elis was equally ancient with the Olympiads.* Cicero asserts, that al-

* *Olympiorum initium autorem habuit Iphitum Elium. Is eos ludos, mercatumque instituit.* V. Paterculus lib. I. See likewise the subsequent article on Arcadia.

ready

ready in the days of Pythagoras, multitudes of people attended such pretended religious games, for the express purpose of trading; so that not a shadow of doubt can be thrown on this interesting point of ancient history.

Some famous fair took place almost every year in Greece, either at Delphi, Nemæa, Delos, or the isthmus of Corinth. The emulation, which reigned in such places, degenerated at last into national jealousies; and the Elians, who practised all the tricks of commerce, were excluded, for good reasons, from the Isthmian games.

With regard to the Amphyctionic fairs, they occurred annually twice in the lapse of twelve lunary months. The assembly of the states general of Greece gave rise to those meetings, by drawing multitudes of people together, either at Delphi, in spring, or at Thermopylæ, where the second sittings were held in autumn. It was impossible, as we have observed already, for such numbers of Greeks to meet in any place, under whatever pretext, without finding commerce of the party, in the same manner that play introduces itself among children.

Dion Chrysostom accuses the Amphyctionic fairs of having degenerated into an infamous traffic of slaves destined for public incontinence.* Indeed we may reasonably suppose, that those merchants, concerning whom we have spoken under the name of *Andrapodocapeloi*, were

* Orat. LXXVII.

not

not backward in producing their pupils there, in order to reap every possible advantage from their factitious charms, and artificial beauty. The fairs of Thermopylæ displayed likewise great abundance of medicinal herbs, and roots, collected on the brow of mount Oeta; and the chief of these was hellebore, which the Greeks employed so universally against disorders of the mind, as well as of the body.

Tithoræa in Phocis, Thermus the capital of Ætolia, and many other towns in that part of the world, were also remarkable for their fairs;* but none enjoyed equal privileges, and immunities with the religious games. There the horrors of war never interrupted the activity of the traders; for an inviolable truce was then published, during which every species of merchandise could be transported in safety, even through an enemy's country, towards Olympia†. Those, who had credit, and arrived there without money, were sure of procuring supplies from the priests of Jupiter, who advanced large sums on interest. It is even said, that Apollonius Thyaneus was assisted by them in this manner; for he, like many other adventurers, most probably carried on some clandestine commerce, of which his historian has not judged proper to give us any information.‡

* Polybius *lib. V.* and Cellarius *Geograph.*

† These Truces were called ΣΠΟΝΔΑΙ ΟΛΥΜΠΙΚΑΙ.

‡ Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*; and afterwards in the treatise on *Finances.*

As

As Greece had neither navigable rivers, nor canals, its commerce was not confined to any constant tract, but depended on the speculations of the merchants, who were all ambulatory, and wandered constantly from one place to another. This however did not prevent them from great undertakings, and various operations of the utmost importance. Æschines reproaches Demosthenes, among other crimes, with having ruined a certain Anaxines of the island of Eubæa, who trafficed, says he, at the Olympian games.* Had this man been a common hawker of wares, instead of a capital merchant, he would never have fallen a prey to Demosthenes, who must have despised such paltry spoils. Yet that author never exculpated himself completely from so weighty a charge; for, without entering into any details whatever, he contents himself with saying, that, according to the deposition of different witnesses, Anaxines was a spy from the court of Macedonia.† If such pretexts were sufficient to occasion the confiscation of property, it would have been no difficult matter to ruin all the foreign merchants of Greece: for passing continually from one state to another, they could not be ignorant of the armaments proposed, and the very projects which were in agitation.

* ΤΗΝ Α'ΝΑΞΙΝΟΥ ΣΥΛΗΨΙΝ ΤΟΥ Ω'ΡΕΙΤΟΥ, ΚΑΤΑΣΚΕΥΑΣΑΣ; ΤΟΥ ΤΑ Α'ΓΟΡΑΣΜΑΤΑ 'ΟΛΥΜΠΙΑΔΙ 'ΑΓΟΡΑΖΟΝΤΟΣ Æschines *against* Ctesiphon.

† Demosthenes, ΠΕΡΙ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΥ.

Thus

Thus in ancient times it was usual for generals, who wished to be informed respecting the interior of any country, to begin by interrogating the merchants, who were found in great numbers both in front and rear of the armies.

This mode of commerce had been adopted even in the midst of Athens, where no shops were seen in private houses. Each species of merchandise had a public place peculiar to itself, and no other covering was provided for the different wares than a shed of osiers or rushes, which communicated to the town the appearance of a continual fair.

Some nations, vain of their nobility, like the Thessalians, or proud, like the Spartans, of their great power, have attached a kind of ignominy to this manner of displaying what was intended for sale under tents of canvass and reeds. But, at Athens, those who dared to reproach the citizens with any thing of that nature, were liable to be brought to justice, and the law ordained very severe punishments for such instances of insolence and pride.*

This regulation, unexampled in the codes of civilized nations, demonstrates that the Athenians protected, as much as possible, their commerce in retail, without which that in wholesale could never be flourishing. When two things are so in-

* Demosthenes, *against Eubulides.*

timately united that they cannot be separated without mutual destruction, it is absurd to esteem the one, and despise the other. Commerce, on a great scale, is certainly very commendable; but as those who attain this are already sufficiently recompensed by fortune, the legislator should reserve encouragements for the petty traders. It was said with reason of that minister of finances in Great Britain, who proposed a duty on shops, that he understood taxation better than sound policy, or natural equity: for an impost is a real burden, and the sale of goods is an uncertain advantage, which unforeseen circumstances either favor or destroy.

The Greeks were so much attached to ambulatory commerce, that they performed journies almost incredible. Ptolemy, in his Geography, speaks of a Macedonian merchant, who sent his clerks into the very center of Sericum, on the borders of China.* This caravan must have followed the southern coast of the Caspian sea, and had a distance of more than five thousand miles to perform, before it returned loaded with the riches of the East. The Greek merchants were so well acquainted with the interior parts of Germany, that they not only knew the length of the Hercynian forest, but even the direction of all the great rivers in that country. It is suspected that they were attracted in search of yellow am-

* *Geograph.* lib. I.

ber

ber to the mouth of the Vistula, where the Tyrians were wont to arrive by sea; thus the merchants of the two countries met there, by courses almost as different as those by which the Spaniards and Potuguese arrived at the Molucca islands.

The communication between the interior of Asia, and the eastern parts of Europe, had been open ever since the remotest periods of antiquity. Already, in the days of Hippocrates, some spiceries of India, and particularly of the Malabar coast, were common in Peloponnesus and Attica; for the trade in perfumery, aromatics, paints, and cosmetics, was chiefly in the hands of the Athenians, as appears by the numerous markets in their capital, destined for the sale of such articles.*

Judging from the description given by Xenophon, in his Economica, of a Phœnician merchant ship, in the harbour of Piræus, it exceeded greatly in size the trading vessels of the Athenians. This proceeded from the superior skill of the Phœnicians in navigation; and be-

* Meursius, *de Ceramico-gemino*, cap. XVI.

Ovid and Pliny inform us that the most celebrated cosmetic, prepared at Athens, was the Oesypa, which softened the skin, and rendered the complexion clear; but it was the most disagreeable of all the drugs employed by the Grecian women.

Oesypa quid redolent, quamvis mittantur Athenis,
Demptus ab immundo vellere succus ovis?

Ovid. *de A. amandi.*

sides, the courses they frequented were so little dangerous, that a greater value might be ventured in one bottom. The Athenians, on the contrary, who navigated the Euxine, and other such stormy seas, were afraid of risking considerable cargoes on a single chance. The small craft generally used in the Crimea had each only twenty rowers, and the price of their entire lading did not amount to more than five or six hundred pounds sterling, as we find by the pleadings of Demosthenes.

It is still a problem, whether the method of the Phœnicians was superior or not to that practised by the Athenians; for the commercial houses of Athens could not be ruined by a single shipwreck, as must frequently have happened at Tyre and Sidon. Hesiod, whose father was an Asiatic merchant, endeavoured to inspire the Greeks of Europe with the maxim that small vessels should not be despised altogether; but when it was proposed to embark merchandise, the largest were always preferable.* In such matters, however, the speculators of Piræus understood the calculation of eventual probabilities better than any man, whose profession consisted in composing hexameter verses on the brow of the Helicon.

It would be rash to advance, that the ancient Greeks had any knowledge of maritime insur-

* ΕΡΓΑ, Κ. Η.

ance;

ance; but they certainly practised all the frauds attending that institution, and were the first inventors of what is now called *barretry*. Masters of vessels began by borrowing considerable sums from bankers, under pretence of forming a cargo. Instead of articles of value they took on board sand or stones only, and sailed from the harbour. When out at sea, they pierced the hull of the ship, which soon went down, and the crew escaping in the boat, hastened to inform the creditors, that all was lost.* It would seem that commercial policy has made small progress in France, when such misdemeanors occur ever day; while in Holland they are almost impracticable from the exactness, with which every thing entered under insurance must be verified.

The merchants of Athens had factories along the Cimmerian Bosphorus, and clerks who remained there during the winter, in order to prepare cargoes for exportation in summer.† The Crimea furnished them with grain, salt-fish, leather and wool, which were either paid for in money, or exchanged for the wines of Greece.

Of all the colonies founded expressly for trading with the capital, the Athenians had none that equalled the importance of Amphipolis. This town was situated at the mouth of the river

* Some account of such *Barretry* is seen in the pleading of Demosthenes *against Zenothemis*.

† Demosthenes *against Phormio*.

Strymon, on the confines of Macedonia, and is now degenerated into a small village, called *Amboli*, under the domination of the Turks, who have succeeded in effacing its former grandeur.

It was from this quarter that the Athenians, for a length of time, procured timber for constructing their fleets, besides a very considerable tribute in silver coin.* The colonists of Amphipolis extended their commerce on one side towards Thrace, and on the other into Macedonia: they possessed the key of the Strymon, whence nothing could depart without their consent. In the bed of that river were seen floating those huge beams, which had been felled on the southern side of mount Rhodope, or amidst the more extensive forests of mount Hemus. As the rivers of that country abounded in fish, Amphipolis became celebrated for curing them, and this branch of industry was infinitely advantageous to the commerce of Greece.

The Athenians were incapable of preserving that important place, when the Macedonians, awaking from a long slumber, perceived the natural resources around them. Philip, father to Alexander, took Amphipolis by force of arms, and added the whole course of the Strymon to his empire. Then, the Athenians were forced to pay ready money for such articles as had formerly cost nothing more than the carriage; and they found

* Thucydides, lib. IV.

the

the same reverse in Macedonia, which the British experienced in America; they became in some measure suppliants, where they had reigned as masters.

The Greeks surpassed all other nations in founding colonies, but they could never preserve any one in dependance. When powerful, they threw off the yoke of the metropolis; and if weak, they became a foreign conquest. But whatever was their destiny, they contributed greatly to promote commerce, by transmitting a taste for the arts to barbarous nations, and increasing the sale of merchandise as they augmented the number of consumers.

Greece might have been regarded as a vast manufacture, which produced every object of luxury executed with an elegance, unequalled by any other nation. Although Asia Minor was covered with Greek towns, it neither produced such intelligent artists nor able workmen as European Greece: and those, who even doubted of this, were considered as persons devoid of taste, genius, or any knowledge of the fine arts.* The great secret of trading nations, in those days, consisted in exhibiting some inimitable productions, like the bronze of Corinth, the purple of Tyre, the glass of Egypt, and the stuffs of Elis, which sold for their weight in gold, and could no more

* Theophrastus, *Charact.* ΠΕΡΙ ΑΑΑΖΟΝΕΙΑΣ.

be counterfeited than the vases of Anaphlystus in Paralia.

Whatever was the astonishing activity of commerce at the port of Piræus, the publicans never offered large sums for the revenues collected there on foreign merchandise; because, they well knew that great quantities were entered fraudulently.*

In the small bay of Corydale, called *Thieves Harbour*, and situated to the north of Piræus, the ships of every nation carried on an avowed contraband. Demosthenes assures us, that, although this place was entirely within the limits of Attica, the town of Athens had not authority sufficient to prevent such practices.† All the maritime cantons trafficked there on their own account, and none dared to violate this territorial sovereignty, because it was founded on a pact, which united all the small states in one republic, like the towns of Holland. In some countries, the wretch, who now introduces a pound of to-

* Meursius has not rightly understood the Greek text of the orater Andocides, when he pretends, that he had farmed, from the republic of Athens, the duty of entry on foreign wares, for thirty-six talents annually.

These kind of contracts were made for a term of three years; and thus Andocides paid only twelve talents each year, or thirty-six for the entire period.—See his pleading relative to *Mysteries*.

† Demosthenes, *against Lacrites*.

bacco,

bacco, or half a measure of salt, without paying duty, is condemned to the galleys; but then, even the capital of Attica refrained from molesting Thieves Harbour, because it belonged to the inhabitants of Corydale, who were sovereigns in their own territory.

As the commerce of Athens was chiefly founded on luxury, it increased or diminished in proportion to the circulation of money in Greece, or to the power and weakness of the Athenians. While they possessed the empire of the sea, their rivals were forced to submit; and all the towns of the Saronic Gulf, such as Egina, Corinth, and Megara, were totally disconcerted. But in attaining this tyrannical ascendency, the republic exhausted itself by continual efforts, and ended by losing not only what it had acquired, but also many former advantages.

It is remarkable, says Isocrates, that all the nations of Greece, who either possessed, or even aspired at the empire of the sea, have plunged themselves into an abyss of disasters and calamities. Such dominion, continues he, is not natural; but founded on a chimera, it intoxicates mankind, deprives them of common sense, and raises up, in the end, such numbers of formidable enemies, as connot be resisted. The inhabitants of the shores and of the islands, of remote as well as of adjoining nations, all unite together against those, who have usurped the sovereignty

sovereignty of the seas, as if they were the general enemies of the human race.*

Does not Isocrates here seem to indicate Great Britain, and predict all that has happened, and what must again take place, if that nation persists in the same immoderate principles, and inequitable maxims.

The ancients had already shrewdness enough to observe, that the possession of naval forces, capable of carrying death and destruction into every quarter of the globe, accasioned always an extravagant pride, which degenerated into giddiness and madness. The profound contempt, entertained by the English for the rest of mankind, never had any other source than in the greatness of their power at sea.

Having already given some explanations concerning the traffic in slaves, as well as the countries where such victims were found, it would be superfluous to enter here into further details on that subject. The different branches of commerce we have indicated seem to prove, that, if the balance of trade did not constantly favor the Athenians, it was by no means against them; for, in that case, the ruin of such a barren country must soon have been effected.

* *De Pace.*—He says that the empire of the sea deranges the very minds of those who aspire to it. ΠΑΡΑΦΡΟΝΕΙΝ ΠΟΙΕΙ ΤΟΥΣ ΕΡΑΣΠΟΝΤΑΣ ΤΗΝ ΑΡΧΗΝ ΤΗΣ ΘΑΛΑΤΤΗΣ.

Of

Of all the causes, which influenced immediately the success of industry at Athens, none contributed more to maintain commerce and manufactures, than the great degree of liberty enjoyed there, and the total prohibition of all exclusive charters. It was a fundamental law of the state, never to favor one citizen more than another, nor to admit of any privileges interfering with political equality.*

Great men might be recompensed with honors and distinctions, but they could not receive any particular grants, either in commerce or manufactures. Some people, from terms badly understood, have been led to imagine, that the Tyrian merchants, established under the protection of Athens, in the island of Delos, had obtained exclusive rights, like those of the India companies of Holland and Great Britain. They were in fact, nothing more than an association of fugitives, who united the fragments of their fortune, for the purposes of commerce, in a manner practised daily by other individuals, without any public sanction: for it is of no consequence to the state, whether a vessel be loaded on account of one, or of twenty proprietors.

As exclusive privileges are inconsistant with natural equity, the most corrupt policy will never dare to establish them by law. Such monopolies therefore, proceeding alone from

* *Collection of Attic Laws*, lib. I.

acts

acts of violence, were incompatible with a free state like Athens, where no merchant could pretend to more indulgence than another, but all were equal in the eye of the law.

Different countries have flourished in proportion as they followed this maxim; but any deviation never failed to occasion a progressive decline, until, commerce at length disappeared, perhaps for ever.

When Solon wished to procure foreign tradesmen in Athens, he promised them honors, and not exclusive advantages. Pecuniary and honorary recompences are in reality the only legal modes of encouraging rising manufactures; and such was the system of Solon, who understood that part of politics better than hundreds of writers in the eighteenth century, or as many ministers placed, either by chance or favor, at the head of administration. Every thing is conducted by them according to maxims more favorable to kings than to the people, whose interests are not less disregarded, because Mr. Necker and those of the same trade, have thought fit to prefix such plausible discourses to the publication of their edicts.

II.—MONEY OF ATHENS.

If all ancient Athenian coins had been lost, we should never have supposed that they were remarkable

remarkable both for an extreme coarseness of engraving, and the most hideous of all devices. The figure of a screech-owl was generally chosen for such purposes, as if it had been intended to select the least graceful of animated forms; like those barbarous and gothic hieroglyphics, called arms by the nobility of Europe.

The ancients were no less sensible than we of the bad taste, which prevailed in the fabrication of Athenian money; for the philosopher Zeno has compared it to a discourse composed of rustic phrases, and coarse expressions.* What Mr. Spanheim, and other modern authors, have written on this subject, is founded on no kind of probability. It appears, that from a spirit of parsimony, very consistent in republics, the treasurers of the state allowed such trifling wages for coining, that no capital artists ever offered their services.

Although the Athenians possessed mines of copper at Colonos, yet they were so unwilling to employ this metal as specie, that they preferred gratifying their taste or vanity, by cutting silver into such small portions, that they were sometimes mistaken, as Aristophanes says, for scales of fishes.

Money of that quality was very unfit for the purposes of commerce; it had the inconvenience of being easily mislaid, and could not

* Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Zeno.*

be

be found without difficulty: besides, the expence of manufacturing such diminutive pieces by the hands of celebrated artists, would have amounted to more than their intrinsic value.

Among the monuments of Grecian Numismatography, we find still some spangles of silver, representing the half of an Athenian obolus; and others of still less value must probably have circulated, when the use of copper was exploded. Different demagogues, who endeavoured to introduce that metal, were forced by satyrs and epigrams to desist from their enterprise. Dionysius the orator, was all his life surnamed the *man of brass*, because he made a long, and perhaps a good discourse, demonstrating the necessity of copper money.

Gold was seldom brought into circulation by the republic, and then in small quantities, either for the commemoration of a victory, or some such glorious event. It is even pretended, that, in all the memoirs of the academy of inscriptions, no golden medal of Athens now exists, which can be considered as authentic.*

Why

* The Athenian golden medals, which Mr. Winkelman pretends to have seen in Italy, appear to have been as false as that Tetradrachma, bearing the pretended effigy of Themistocles, the absurdity of which is evident from the barbarous inscription it contains, were we not well assured, that no money was ever coined with the image of Themistocles. The false golden medals of Athens, were cast in moulds taken from the

Why so little of this precious metal was employed by the directors of coinage has never been explained; yet these men, endowed with great penetration, must have acted from principle in an affair of such importance to the state.

To account for their conduct, it must be known, that silver bore a smaller proportion to gold in Asia than in Attica. Thus the Athenians would always have been losers by purchasing gold from the eastern nations, while, on the contrary, they gained by silver, which was the produce of their own country.

In Asia, says Herodotus, gold is to silver as one to thirteen; and at Athens, according to Plato, it was in the proportion of one to twelve.* According to this calculation the merchants, in purchasing at Sardes in Lydia fifty pound weight of gold for the Athenian market, would have lost by their bargain fifty pound weight of silver, because they must

the silver medals, of which likewise a great number were forgeries, like that one, said to be of the canton of the Scambonidæ, cited by Goltzius.

* Herodotus, lib. III. and Plato in the Dialogue called *Hipparchus*. Modern authors who have written on the coins of the ancients, such as Gronovius, Arbuthnot, Rambach, and others pretend, that previous to the days of Plato, the proportion of gold to silver, at Athens, was as one to ten: for, say they, the drachma of coined gold, was worth ten drachmæ of coined silver. But the gold coined then was not at the standard of twenty-four carats; and when any proportion of that kind is to be established, the metals must be supposed pure, otherwise all inferences are nugatory.

have

have sold for twelve, what had cost them thirteen. It was therefore wise in the intendants, to employ no other metal than such as they could procure without loss; but many modern nations of Europe, instead of following this example, continue to coin gold, which they are forced to purchase at any price from the Portuguese.

The operations of those financiers, who endeavour to determine the value of metals, by dint of civil laws, are very inconsiderate, and differ exceedingly from the conduct of Solon, and all the demagogues of Athens.

European Greece possessed no other mines of silver, than those of Attica, which were astonishingly productive, and the metal was refined to nearly the same standard as that of France. Of this quality consisted the money of the republic from the tetradrachma down to the quarter of an obolus, which, exclusive of gold, comprehended ten different coins, each forming a subdivision of another, and corresponding with certain weights appropriated to commerce.

In proportion as the combustible matter necessary for refining metals became rare, the mines diminished in value; and when the undertakers were forced to descend to a great depth after the different veins, their gain was reduced almost to nothing. Xenophon observes, that, even in his time, six hundred slaves, employed in such labor, did not procure daily for their owners

owners more than the sum of one hundred drachmæ, or three pounds sterling.*

From the dross, found in great quantities at the foot of mount Laurion in the south of Attica, it appears that the silver ore, called *Argyritis*, contained a great proportion of copper. Many ages had elapsed before the metallists of Athens became expert in purifying minerals :† but they afterwards carried this art so far as to be unrivalled amongst the nations of Greece. Aristophanes seems to insinuate, that they took advantage sometimes of their knowledge to debase the money of the republic. It is not right, however, to interpret literally, as Spanheim has done, all that a satyric poet has ventured to advance, on a theatre entirely without restraint.‡

Infinitely more good faith, with respect to the system of coinage, was found at Athens than at Rome, where many things were practised, either clandestinely, or publicly, in total opposition to sound policy. In a former dissertation some pains have been taken to demonstrate, that nothing contributed more to the fall of the Roman empire, than the scandalous depreciation of specie. The emperors, to secure their armies, promised great sums, which they paid

* ΠΕΡΙ ΠΡΟΣΟΔΩΝ or *Treatise on the Revenues of the Republic.*

† Strabo *Geograph.* lib. IX.

‡ Spanheim's commentaries on the comedy of the *Frogs.*

afterwards in such bad metal, that the legions did not, in reality, receive more than one tenth part of their due. Confidence could no longer be placed in troops, so often deceived by words, and even cheated under pretence of doing them justice. On the other hand, forgeries augmented without end: every person was so desirous of partaking in this lucrative trade, that it became impossible to distinguish the false money from that of the prince; because the one had as much alloy as the other. Pubic faith disappeared, credit decayed, commerce was no more, and the state without either pillars or foundations could no longer resist the slightest attacks of barbarians.

No example appears in history of any murmur, among the Athenian armies, on account of alterations in the quality of their pay. The author of the *Economica*, who is supposed to have been Aristotle, asserts indeed, that Timotheus, at one time, paid the sailors with copper; and from this he infers, that the Athenian admiral had distributed false money. Nothing can really be more absurd than this imputation; for we are now perfectly informed, even in the smallest details of every thing concerning this transaction which Demosthenes, in a violent pleading against Timotheus in favor of an Athenian banker, explains very distinctly.

Timotheus

Timotheus possessed a quantity of copper in ingots, and this was deposited with bankers, as a security when he borrowed one thousand pieces of silver, for the purpose of paying his fleet. Certainly nothing is discovered here but a lawful procedure, without any tincture of that fraud alluded to by the author of the *Economica*.*

As long as the Athenians were powerful and free, their money passed current among all the nations of Europe and Asia, which would not have happened, had any diminution taken place either in their weights or value. Zeno the philosopher, who complained of the rudeness of the engraving, bore testimony to the purity of the metal; and this is attested beyond contradiction by the prodigious quantities of drachmæ and tetradrachmæ, still found in the cabinets of the curious.

We have now to notice that famous law of Solon, which abolished legal interest, by admitting of no fixed standard; for considering money as a merchandise, he thought it should be sold or borrowed on whatever conditions the parties chose to stipulate.†

Amongst the crowd of trapezites, or bankers, who were found at Athens, some made maritime usury amount to thirty per cent,‡ without

* Demosthenes, *against Timotheus*.

† Lysias, against *Theomnestus*.

‡ Demosthenes against *Lacrites*.

being liable to any molestation, much less punishment, because they were under the protection of the law. If any objections are started here, we have only to observe, that the Athenians never complained of any defects in this regulation, neither was it ever changed by those who had the power of abolishing such decrees.

Interest always determines itself, according to the quantity of specie, and the validity of the mortgages on which money is borrowed: in this manner at Athens, without any law for the purpose, it became fixed at twelve per cent on effects, and eighteen per cent where payment appeared doubtful. As the quantity of money then did not amount to the third part of what is in circulation, since the discovery of America, the common scale of interest in all places of commerce was twelve per cent. The reduction which has now taken place, instead of being produced by statesmen, bankers, theologists, or moralists, is only a consequence of our connection with the new world. If Europe in one night was deprived of half its riches, we should find interest at nine per cent in the morning, in spite of all our laws and edicts.

What has since been called usury, the Greeks termed *Tokos*, which signified the bringing forth of young; and their capitals were always prolific in proportion to the scarcity of money.

If

If Solon had made an irrevocable law to fix interest at six per cent, it must have ruined all Attica. The rich proprietors would then have emigrated to establish themselves at Egina, Corinth, and all other trading towns, where they could derive greater advantages from their fortune. Had maritime usury been prohibited, the commerce of Piræus, chiefly carried on at great risk, must have perished altogether. The Greeks were the most eager people in the world to hazard all, whenever they perceived the smallest ray of hope, and their moralists had no unfavorable ideas of what has since been called maritime usury. This they conceived to be nothing more than a civil contract between two or more enterprizing men, one of whom risked his money, and another his ship, in order to divide the profits of their expedition, according to certain stipulations. Demosthenes shows clearly, that the Athenian bankers required greater premiums for vessels bound to dangerous coasts in the rude season, than for those plying from one cape to another during the summer; and all the insurance offices in Europe, at this day, are actuated by a similar principle.

Those who declaim against offices of insurance, and utter so many absurdities concerning maritime usury, have taken care to be perfectly silent on *Lotto*, which they see encouraged in

all ecclesiastical states, without even excepting those of the Pope. Yet never was a more dangerous example exhibited to mankind. It subverts all laws directed against games of hazard, and not only renders them inefficatious, but even contradictory, when bishops, who possess four hundred thousand crowns annually, are the first to establish and protect such ruinous institutions.

The Athenians were certainly great gamblers, but they were never invited to play against the republic. Although Solon did not fix any legal interest, yet those, who presumed to deviate from the general usage in this respect, were considered as vile and ignominious men. The voice of the public ceased not to proclaim such actions, and the disrepute they occasioned was so great, that the legislators did not think it necessary to inflict any other punishment. How desirable were it for mankind, that individuals could always be restrained in this manner, more from respect to public opinion, than the dread of penalties.

III.—REVENUES OF THE REPUBLIC OF ATHENS, AND THE OPERATIONS OF THE FINANCIERS OF GREECE.

Never did any people pay more attention to matters of finance than the Athenians. Inhabiting

inhabiting a small territory, they had often great wars to maintain on the Mediterranean, where their fleets sometimes encountered severe checks; and they were forced, besides, to depend on strangers, not only for timber, but even for the materials of their sails and cordage.

This state of things required astonishing economy, and great sagacity in discovering resources, particularly such as were somewhat consistent with justice and equity. Solon divided the citizens into four classes: the first comprehended all those who, without possessing any land, cultivated the property of others for the sixth part of the produce. Isæus, the orator, assures us, that in the plain of Thria, between Athens and Eleusis, some spots afforded annually eight per cent. of their value, independent of all expences:* while Mr. Necker, in his treatise on finance, pretends that in France this proportion does not exceed three per cent. As no such difference could arise from the nature of the soil in these countries, it must therefore be attributed entirely to the superiority of administration, and of agriculture, or to the high price of grain in Attica.

The order of men we have mentioned, were exempted from every species of tribute; but all others were taxed according to the produce of their lands. Those, who procured five hun-

* Isæus in a pleading relative to the *inheritance of Hagnias*.

dred measures of wine, oil, or dried fruits from their plantations, paid annually an attic talent to the republic, amounting to one hundred and eighty pounds sterling.

It soon became obvious, that this system was founded on a false calculation. When any person could purchase so much property that it returned a thousand measures annually, he continued to pay no more than one talent; and this was certainly an injustice.

Experience in every other country, as well as at Athens and Rome, has shown the impracticability of confining citizens by positive laws to limited acquisitions; because they had a thousand means of eluding them, and could have invented as many more, had these been insufficient. The simplicity of legislators was even matter of ridicule, when they attempted to prescribe bounds for such a passion as avarice, which knows how to surmount every obstacle, and vanquish all difficulties.

As inequality of fortune increased, it was necessary to abandon the system of Solon, not in part, but altogether. Censors were then created, who determined every five years what was the value of plantations, forests, farms, gardens, and all other grounds belonging to the Athenians.

Two such evaluations, made at different periods, still exist, and differ very little from each other;

other; they make the funds of Attica amount to six thousand talents, or one million and eighty thousand pounds sterling.*

When this survey was performed, the treasurers knew exactly how much must be the produce of any impost on lands. The hundredth penny, says Demosthenes, afforded sixty talents, which the proprietors of funds were obliged to collect amongst them for the public treasury, without the smallest remission. Sometimes indeed the twelfth penny was required, and this of course amounted to five hundred talents, or ninety thousand pounds sterling.†

The greatest urgencies of the republic never induced the legislators to exceed this sum, when the preservation of liberty required not only money, but even those sacrifices of blood, which slaves are likewise forced to lavish for the vanity of despots, and tyrants.

This office of the censors was called by the Athenians *timema*, a term used very differently in the jargon of the Grecian financiers; and this has led Meursius, as well as many other modern writers, to mistake the total estimate of lands for the amount of the impost.

* Demosthenes ΠΕΡΙ ΣΥΜΟΡΙΩΝ and Polybus, L. H.

† This calculation is extracted from Demosthenes, and may be easily verified; because sixty talents are the hundredth part of six thousand, and five hundred, the twelfth part or twelfth penny of the value of the lands.

It

It is highly necessary to remove this egregious error, which has occasioned much confusion in the history of Attica, where no such considerable revenues ever existed, as these authors have been led to imagine. Yet the first duty of an historian, says Polybius, is to procure exact information concerning the finances of a nation, otherwise he cannot form any exact judgment of its power or weakness, either in peace or war. When authors proceed so ignorantly in these matters, we may suppose what must be the fate of their readers.

No sooner was the general assessment prepared at Athens, than the different cantons received information of their quotas from the petty magistrates, called *Demarchs*. These chiefs of villages, assisted by a council and a secretary, announced to the proprietors of their districts, the sums allotted for them to pay; but the proportions were no longer regulated by produce, as in the time of Solon, for the quantity or value of land determined the taxation, according to the estimates in the registers of the assessors.*

As the Demarchs had the reputation of being very severe in making such collections, Aristophanes

* The operations of the Romans, with regard to their ceſſes and collectors, had been copied exactly after those of the Athenians, whose method was much superior to that of the Terrier. In the course of five years, a farm may be greatly ameliorated, or its

tophanes has introduced them into his comedy of the *Clouds*, where they are compared to biting insects, which live only on human blood. It was surely not their fault, if the republic exacted heavy contributions from the peasants; but vexations were connected with the very duties of their office, considered as the lowest degree of magistracy. We find Demosthenes pleading in favor of a Demarchs of Halime, whose mother, from being a nurse, had taken to selling ribbons in the market of Athens.

The general evaluation of all the lands in Attica, amounting to one million and eighty thousand pounds, did not include either the places consecrated to the gods, or the treasures deposited in the temples. The intrinsic value of such riches is difficult to be ascertained; but by judging from those contained in the *Parthenon*, or great temple of Minerva, the sum total must have been very considerable.

Pericles guided, as we have observed, by a spirit of ostentation, was unpardonably to blame in employing so much gold to decorate a colossal statue. He endeavoured to excuse himself indeed by alledging, that, in any great urgency, this metal might be converted into specie;* but

its produce diminished by fortuitous causes, such as bad harvests and mortality of cattle. Thus Quinquennial estimates, prevented the unjust consequences of the Terriers.

* Thucydides, lib. II.

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he was either ignorant, or pretended not to know the difficulty of forcing superstition to refund any thing in its possession. Thus these sacred treasures remained useless among the Athenians, until they became the prey of the famous robber Lachares, and another, still more remarkable, called Verres, who was accused by Cicero of having plundered the temple of Minerva at Athens.*

Such were the consequences of popular fanaticism on the one hand, and the false policy of Pericles on the other: for whenever riches are collected in temples, with the hopes of corrupting the divinity, they will certainly be sooner or later converted, in the same manner, to satisfy the avarice of princes, or the wants of thieves. To render a long chapter of criminal laws unnecessary, and prevent those dreadful tortures reserved for sacrilege, our clergy should attend to the counsels they have heard in vain for near two thousand years, and no longer suffer such ornaments to profane places of public worship.

When it pleased the Lacedæmonians to leave Greece in repose, and no apprehensions were entertained of foreign wars, the citizens of Athens experienced few direct taxes; because the

* *Athenis audistis ex æde Minervæ grande auri pondus ablatum . . . . Hujus consilii non modo participem, C Verrem; sed principum fuisse reperietis.* In Verr. lib. I. De Legatione.

revenues

revenues of the republic sufficed for all ordinary expences. Among the principal resources of the Athenians, we may consider the conquered countries, tributary towns, duties on merchandise, produce of salt works at Piræus and Phaleris, olive trees sacred to Minerva, silver mines of Lunium, fisheries on the east and west coasts of Attica, besides confiscations, fines, tribute of courtesans and poll-tax of strangers. This last article was regulated at twelve drachmæ for each man, and six for women and children; from this it results, that the ten thousand strangers, supposed to reside on the territory of Athens, contributed annually the sum of eighty thousand drachmæ.* Those who preferred paying in common with the citizens, found little difficulty in procuring an exemption from this tax, which was considered as humiliating, and they were then distinguished by the term of *Isotoles* or *Homotoles*.

It is easy to conceive, that the annual revenue of Athens was greatly influenced by times and circumstances. This variation was considered as a secret of state, to be concealed from the rest of Greece; and the demagogues, who were the principal secretaries of the treasury, did not think fit at all times to communicate such matters to the people. Demosthenes and Æschines, who were both feed by the republic, differed

* Meursius, notes on *Hesychius*.

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as much in their calculations on this point, as the orators of the British Parliament. It is not uncommon there to hear one member insisting, for two hours, that the nation is totally ruined; and another undertakes to prove, in a speech of equal length, that nothing ever equalled the present prosperity of Great Britain.

According to the opinion of Æschines, generally adopted, the demagogue Lycurgus conducted the department of the finances, during fifteen years, with so much economy and integrity, that the annual revenue of Athens was encreased, at least, more than twelve hundred talents, or two hundred and sixteen thousand pounds.*

This was some time after the defeat of the Athenians at Cheronæa, and that event consequently, did not prove so fatal as the author of the *Esprit des Lois* has imagined. The admirable order, mentioned in the finances of this people, would soon have obliterated all their losses, had not the Macedonians invaded Asia but the conquest of that country, and the disunion of European Greece, occasioned the total ruin of the Athenian government.

The author of that strange work, called *Economica*, never introduces a single word concerning economy; but he developes different infamous proceedings of the satrapes of Persia, the kings of Caria, and the demagogues

* Æschines, ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΠΑΡΑ ΠΡΕΣΒΕΙΑΣ.

of

of Greece, in order to extort money from the people. Among other examples of this nature, the Athenians furnished one, which is too memorable in history to be passed over in silence; and never did any nation practise similar economy.

The states of Greece had formed a common fund in the island of Delos, to receive annually certain stipulated quotas for the protection of the country, against any future attempts of the Persian despots. Aristides the demagogue, who, although a financier, passed for a man of great probity, represented, that the island of Delos was liable, from want of fortifications, to be surprised and pillaged by the pirates of the Mediterranean. Their treasure therefore was transported to Athens for its greater security; and the Athenians took such care of the deposit, that it never got out of their hands. The different quotas, however, continued to be paid, and were even doubled, under pretence that the emperors of Persia became daily more formidable. This stroke of policy augmented the revenue of Athens, and diminished the reputation of Aristides, who was accused by the philosopher Theophrastus of being amphibious in morals, rigid in private life, and little scrupulous in public transactions.

In general, the Greeks were allowed to be the most cunning usurers and expert financiers in the

the universe. The publicans of Rome, says Cicero, are certainly so odious, that nothing is more to be desired than the possibility of dispensing with their services: but those of Greece, continues he, are still more detestable, from their vexatious manner of collecting tributes in the islands of the Archipelago, and the towns of Asia minor.* It should be observed, that the Romans, by requiring enormous contributions from the kings of Asia, obliged them, in turn, to oppress their subjects, by employing inexorable tax gatherers. To them they falsly attributed genius and abilities, when neither the one nor the other was necessary: for the trade of inventing imposts is only adopted to the capacity of silly knaves.

The principal bankers of European Greece, ever since the remotest periods, where the priests of Olympus and Delos. Entrusted with prodigious offerings, consecrated to Jupiter and Apollo, they converted a part into specie, which they lent at very high interest, not only to private persons, but likewise to towns and provinces.† The Treasurers of Athens, perceiving the great success of the priests of Delphi, and Elis, were not tardy in following their example. They saw no impropriety in lodging the money of the republic with bankers, and appropriating

* Epistle to *Quintius Cicero.*

† Thucydides, lib. I. and Demosthenes *against Midias.*

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the interest to themselves without detriment to the state. It happened that a general bankruptcy took place at once amongst those who had borrowed very large capitals, and the treasurers knew no other method of escaping censure than by setting fire to the public treasury, by which the great temple of Minerva was nearly consumed, as well as the empty coffers of the republic. It was then reported by the incendiaries, that their registers having perished in the flames, they had no longer the means of accounting for the sums delivered to their charge.* If Europe produces now some financiers equally cunning, yet surely none ever surpassed those of Athens.

Whatever importance was attained by the banks of Delphi and Olympia, yet they did not equal that which was established in the temple of Diana at Ephesus; where all sums were received as deposits, on a similar plan with the bank of Amsterdam. Dion Chrysostom assures us, that the inhabitants of Asia, from the sovereign prince down to the lowest merchant, conveyed their capitals thither, to secure them

The Corinthians themselves, however rich they might have been, borrowed money sometimes from the priests of Delphi; and it appears probable, that all those who had deposited articles of value in the temple of Apollo, under the name of treasures, could likewise obtain credit.

* Ulpian, *Commentaries on the harangue of Demosthenes against Timarchus*; where mention is made of this fire, in the temple of Minerva, which contained the public treasury.

as much as possible against all accidents: for never, says he, was the smallest injury offered to the temple of Diana, even when Ephesus was taken by assault.* But the Romans, during the civil wars, attempted twice to plunder this treasure, for the preservation of which the priests no doubt received some gratification; and it is probable that they likewise practised usury with the sums confided to their care.

From these details it may be concluded, that all the transactions of theology in ancient Greece, were immediately connected with those of finance. At Rome also, whenever any lucrative establishment was proposed, the priests always ceded the sacred places for its reception. Thus we find the treasury of the republic in the temple of Saturn; the mint in the temple of Juno, and the national funds in that of Castor and Pollux. On the ruins of these very edifices are now constructed the Datary's office, the Apostolic chamber, the bank of the Holy Ghost, the hall of Contractors for grain, and all that human invention can suggest to enrich a small number of men, while the generality experience an excess of misery, throughout Romania.

As the interest of money was always very high among the Greeks, it is evident, that when towns and republics were once under the necessity of borrowing large sums, they approached

* *Orat, Rhodiac*, XXX. and Cæsar's Commentaries,

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the very brink of ruin. For, usury at twelve per cent, the lowest rate in Greece, required little more than eight years to eqnal the capital; and then the poverty of the borrowers, was twice greater than before.

Athens had fortunately avoided contracting any national debt, until the time of its subjection to the thirty tyrants imposed by Sparta, who were capable of devouring the republic. After the flight of these monsters, when it was no longer necessary to furnish the sums extorted by the Lacedæmonians in opposition to every principle of equity, embarrassment ceased; and order began to take place in the finances, until the wars of Sylla threw all again into confusion. The Athenians were then forced to incur such enormous debts, that their resources could no longer support them; and not even the shadow of public credit remained at the arrival of Atticus, who endeavoured as much as possible to remedy their desperate affairs.*

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

* Cornelius Nepos, *Life of Atticus*.

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